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MEMOIRS

OF

SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

VOL. II.

MEMOIRS

OF

SOPHIA DOROTHEA,

CONSORT OF GEORGE I.

CHIEFLY FROM THE SECRET ARCHIVES OF HANOVER,
BRUNSWICK, BERLIN, AND VIENNA;

INCLUDING

A DIARY OF THE CONVERSATIONS

OF ILLUSTRIOUS PERSONAGES OF THOSE COURTS,

ILLUSTRATIVE OF HER HISTORY,

WITH

LETTERS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS.

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Now first published from the Originals.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY ASIATIC SOCIETY

Second Edition.

LONDON:
HENRY COLBURN, PUBLISHER,
GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.
1845.

923.142
Dar/Mem
32552

LONDON:
PRINTED BY G. J. PALMER, SAVOY STREET, STRAND.

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DIARY OF CONVERSATIONS

OF THE

PRINCIPAL PERSONAGES AT THE COURTS OF HANOVER AND ZELLE,

ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE HISTORY OF

SOPHIA DOROTHEA,

WRITTEN BY HERSELF.

AND NOW FIRST TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL KEPT BY THAT PRINCESS DURING HER THIRTY-TWO YEARS' IMPRISONMENT IN THE CASTLE OF AHLDEN.

THIS Diary is divided into three periods. The first, under the general head of "THE BETROTHAL," is illustrative of the early life of Sophia Dorothea to the abrupt termination of her engagement to the Crown Prince of Wolfenbüttel, in favour of the Crown Prince of Hanover. It embodies many interesting particulars respecting her mother's early history, which it is obvious the writer could only have received from the Duchess of Zelle. The second period, "THE MARRIAGE," is much more the result of her own recollections, and illustrates that portion of her unhappy life passed by the Princess as the wife of the Crown Prince of Hanover, under his roof; and, the third period, "THE IMPRISONMENT," narrates the intrigues of her enemies to effect her ruin, ending with her prolonged incarceration in the Castle of Ahlden, after an illegal sentence of divorce from her husband.

DIARY OF CONVERSATIONS.

PART I.

THE BETROTHAL.

A DUCAL LOVER.

BREDA, 1665.

Duke George William of Brunswick-Lüneburg and Eleonore Marquise d'Olbreuse.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

To your kind assistance and advice, of which I gladly availed myself, I am indebted for the knowledge I have acquired of the language of your native country. This has more than ever convinced me that any one, with the least pretension to education, ought to study his mother-tongue above all others.

ELEONORE D'OLBREUSE.

I feel honoured by such praise, but can consider it only as a proof of your regard, of which I deserve but a very small share; yet I greatly rejoice in having contributed, though in so trifling a manner, towards the accomplishment of your wishes, and am much flattered by being made acquainted by your highness with my success.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Being obliged shortly to quit this place, my present satisfaction would be considerably increased, could I induce you to entertain a desire that has hitherto been left unaccomplished. You would, by so doing, greatly contribute to my comfort. I am anxious that you should follow me to Hanover, and grant me there the enjoyment of your delightful company. How happily might we there spend our time!

ELEONORE.

I regret being obliged to oppose your wishes. Consider, my Prince, your own and my situation. You as a sovereign, and I separated from all my friends, since my father has been forced by the stern commands of his King to abandon his estates and property. In consequence of which, he

possesses only the bare means of subsistence. What might the world think of me! My good name is all that belongs to me, and I may soon be left with this only to seek the esteem of my fellow-creatures.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

My dear young lady, you evidently misinterpret my intentions. They are to wed you with the sanction of the Church, and to live happily with you.

ELEONORE.

I cannot doubt your honourable intentions towards me, but I must determinedly oppose them. Consider, my Prince, not only your exalted rank, but also the promise you have made to your illustrious brother, Bishop Ernest Augustus, not to marry, which, as you informed me, you have repeated in your letters to von Grapendorf.*

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

That promise relates to a marriage on the right hand.† Are you not aware that my uncles, in accordance with a settled arrangement not to marry a Princess or a lady of equal rank, passed

* Member of the Council at the Court of Zelle.

† See vol. i. p. 12.

their days happily with their consorts by a left-handed marriage, and, in these instances, the ladies and children of Dukes Frederick and Augustus were considered to belong to the nobility, and were provided with fortunes suitable to their high station. And pray what can hinder me from following their example? Surely nothing but the want of your consent.

ELEONORE.

An acquaintance with such examples as your illustrious uncles ought to make me alter my determination, nevertheless I cannot waver in my resolution to regard, and must ever insist on regarding, your exalted station, and your obligations to your illustrious brother, Bishop Ernest Augustus,* in order that you, my gracious lord, do not charge yourself with a burthen, which, after a little time, might become intolerable; and this induces me to request your Highness to abandon your intentions in my favour.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Nothing in this world shall make me abandon them. My resolution, I beg leave to inform you, is as firm as I venture to hope yours is change-

* Bishop of Osnabrück.

able; and I trust that your inclinations may shortly be brought to accord with my own.

ELEONORE.

It is not your own happiness only I have to consider, but that of others. Remember, gracious Duke, the Venetian lady, and what you told me of her child, Luke Buccow.*

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

The unbounded confidence I reposed in your discretion induced me to acquaint you with that affair, to prove how faithfully I accomplish the promises I made you.

ELEONORE.

I humbly solicit your pardon, my Prince, if I abused your confidence; but pray consider if I am not advising you for your advantage; for that object I must always hold in view.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

I feel assured that your advice has been for my benefit; but, my dear young lady, should I convince you that your present determination is not to my advantage, will you not then alter your mind?

* A former mistress of the Duke's is here alluded to, by whom he had a natural child.

ELEONORE.

I would willingly do this, under any circumstances where I was not personally concerned. But I beg to be excused if I am obliged to wait on the Duchess of Tarento, in whose society I had the happiness of obtaining your Highness's acquaintance. [*Exit.*

Enter MARQUIS D'OLBREUSE.*

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Marquis, how do you do?

D'OLBREUSE.

At your Highness's command. Why so pensive?

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Hitherto I have not found it possible so to incline your daughter's thoughts in my favour, as to induce her to a union with me, to lighten my troubles, fatigues, and dangers, and to sweeten the enjoyments of life as my wedded consort.

D'OLBREUSE.

Where an attachment appears to exist, yet the lady shows her lover no evidence of his being in her favour, it is most advisable not to take any

* A Protestant refugee French noble from Poitou, father of Eleonore.

notice of her uncertain sentiments, till a positive disinclination be made manifest. In this instance, however, I think my daughter will do well to adhere to her resolution.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

You hold out a glimpse of hope which you immediately discourage. Certainly all imaginable obstructions have been brought before me. My situation as a sovereign, my obligations to my younger brother, recollections of my early life, and many things varied and opposite; and though I have endeavoured to remove these by explanations, the consent of your daughter has not been obtained. Perhaps you would render me some assistance.

D'OLBREUSE.

It cannot be unknown to your Highness that my ancestors were distinguished by the antiquity and nobility of their family. It is true I have been favourably received by the Duchess of Tarento, but I have been deprived of my estates in France on account of my religion, and may be deprived in my old age of the means of subsistence. It is possible, therefore, that in uniting yourself with my daughter you may charge

yourself with a burthen, which in time could not but become troublesome, and give you cause of regret for your precipitation.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

As the sovereign of a small but happy country, I hope to possess the means of setting aside your objections. Many persons, by showing themselves devoted to my interests, have secured for themselves ample means of subsistence.

D'OLBREUSE.

With a grateful acknowledgment of your kind regards, I cannot but express my desire not to oppose your wishes to promote apparently my daughter's welfare; but I beg leave to add that she is her own mistress. You can urge your wishes, if you have any expectation or desire of success.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

In accordance with your advice, I intend talking to her again on this subject, particularly today, this being, as I have learned, after particular inquiries respecting its celebration, her birthday.

D'OLBREUSE.

Yes; this is the twenty-sixth anniversary of

her birth, and the Duchess of Tarento will celebrate it by receiving my daughter's friends.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

I am delighted that I have not been mistaken in my conjecture, and shall endeavour to contribute some memento in honour of so memorable a day.

(*Enter servant, who presents a letter to the Duke.*)

SERVANT.

It arrived by a special messenger.

[*Exit servant.*

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Excuse me. (*He opens the letter.*) I am to lose no time in making myself acquainted with its contents, as the bearer waits for my reply. (*Reads hurriedly.*) I must see this person at once. [*Exit Duke George.*

D'OLBREUSE.

Surely this must be important intelligence, for it caused the Duke to finish abruptly a conversation in which he was greatly interested. Perhaps he is soon to leave here. If my daughter would not let slip from her good fortune, and would adhere firmly to her resolution upon the proposals made

to her, all might soon be settled. A more noble, steady, and amiable husband, as a private gentleman, she cannot wish for. On due consideration of all the circumstances that have arisen since our first interview, his conduct towards my daughter, and the reputation which precedes and follows him everywhere, and so honourably distinguishes him above his equals, I must confess that it appears best to advise my daughter to accept his offer. The Duke will surely keep his word. He has repeatedly and bindingly promised to provide for her. Considering also his unwavering determination to attain his object, there can scarcely be a doubt that he will proceed steadily to the completion of his intentions. It is therefore manifestly for the advantage of my daughter to acquiesce in his wishes.

Enter ELEONORE.

ELEONORE.

It is impossible sufficiently to express the kindness shown me by the Duchess of Tarento. She has given me this medallion likeness of Duke George, besides making me other valuable presents, and has desired to see me again this evening.

D'OLBREUSE.

I am glad to find that this affords you so much pleasure. Just now I was talking with the Duke respecting you. He appeared unusually grave when I entered, and made some complaints about you.

ELEONORE.

Complained about me!—after I had sought to do all in my power to fulfil his wishes, in accordance with the recommendation I had received.

D'OLBREUSE.

Not on the account to which you allude, but respecting your accompanying him to Hanover, to which you have not given your consent. Therefore give it your earnest consideration, as it might greatly improve my situation as well as your own, should he act according to his promise. For which reason I must advise you to consider the matter well. [*Exit d'Olbreuse.*

ELEONORE.

My dear father is, no doubt, greatly interested in any question regarding my welfare, but, in going to the Duke's residence, in what situation should I appear? It is quite impossible for me to believe that I am to be retained there as his mistress.

The Duke could never intend to propose such a thing, and I am as little likely to accept it. Rather let me live in poverty, and procure the means of subsistence for my father and myself by the labour of my hands, and my own industry, than occupy a situation dishonourable to my parent.

THE COURTSHIP.

Duke George William, the Marquis d'Olbreuse, and Eleonore.

[SAME DATE.]

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

In our interview this morning I only surmised what I am now sure of, and in relation to which I hesitated to request a favour at your hands. Pray take this trifle (*handing a small casket*) as a mark of my sincerity in wishing you joy on your birthday, and of my wish to celebrate many anniversaries of this happy day in your company; while on this occasion I venture to repeat my request to be allowed to be united to you in the bonds of wedlock, and that you would suffer yourself to be induced to spend your days happily with me under my own roof.

ELEONORE (*declining to take the Duke's present*).

It is impossible not to acknowledge the many kindnesses,—I know not how to reply.—Oh, how happy should I feel, were it in my power to fulfil your honourable wishes!

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Once more I solicit your acceptance of this trifling *souvenir*.

D'OLBREUSE.

Really your highness's exceeding liberality,—more particularly the kind manner in which it is exhibited,—cannot but excite a sense of the deepest obligation. How great would be my happiness if either my daughter or myself could be enabled to prove our gratitude!

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

I take you at your word, and, as truly as I intend keeping my promises, I require a similar fulfilment from you. Beloved Eleonore! let me urge you to consent to our union, that we may pass our days in a blessed tranquillity at Hanover! You, as her parent, will, I venture to say, contribute to the accomplishment of my wishes.

D'OLBREUSE.

It is quite impossible that I can interfere farther

in a matter of such extreme delicacy and importance. I leave it entirely in her hands, the more completely to secure her happiness.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Eleonore, do not let me continue to solicit in vain. Remember that your father may always remain near you. Do not, my dear young lady, longer withhold your consent.

ELEONORE (*in tears*).

The Duchess of Tarento advised me, as my protectress, after representing the whole affair in every point of view to her, to give my consent; but this I have hitherto not been able to do, notwithstanding the honourable nature of your proposals, because I shall be obliged to separate from my early friends and acquaintances, who accompanied me hither, whom till now I have assisted as much as was in my power. By giving my consent, I should fix myself in an entirely strange country, where I know no one, and where it would be difficult to know how to conduct myself to the satisfaction of my sovereign, his exalted family, and other persons of distinction whom I might there meet with.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

If these constitute all your troubles, you would be wise to disregard them. Time and your amiable disposition will soon acquire for you many friends. Give your consent, and no time shall be lost in getting our union solemnised by a priest.

ELEONORE.

It is absolutely impossible that I should give my consent, though I shall always remain gratefully obliged to you for your kind intentions, until I have again considered the case, and my inclinations appear to harmonise with yours.

D'OLBREUSE.

Well, my dear daughter, let us consider, and come to some resolution as to your future happiness.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

And I request to be speedily made acquainted with your decision,—particularly before I am compelled to quit this place by pressing business, which I must now leave you to arrange.

[*Exit Duke George.*

D'OLBREUSE, (*taking his daughter's hand*).

Come, let us take the advice of your kind friend the Duchess.

THE CONSENT GIVEN.

BREDA, 1665.

The Marquise d'Olbreuse.

ELEONORE.

AFTER taking the advice of my friends, I believe I must acknowledge to myself that my feelings for the Duke amount to more than respect for his admirable character and numerous virtues. Therefore it will undoubtedly be best to listen to my father's opinion.

Enter the MARQUIS D'OLBREUSE.

D'OLBREUSE.

Well, my dear daughter, have you made up your mind, and do you intend giving your consent?

ELEONORE.

Yes, dearest father, I intend to realise your wishes,—principally on your account, in order to

procure you, and I hope others also, the agreeable prospect of a more easy life.

Enter DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

I have received such intelligence from home as will, in a short time, require my presence there, my eldest brother being undoubtedly very ill, and if to-morrow I do not receive more satisfactory news, I shall be obliged to depart. Previously to which I most fervently desire,—partly for my own satisfaction, and in order to guide my farther intentions,—to be favoured, my dear and honoured Eleonore, with your resolution.

ELEONORE (*hesitating and embarrassed*).

Dear father!

D'OLBREUSE.

I suppose I must speak for you. (*To the Duke.*) I have reason to believe my daughter's sympathies are in your highness's favour.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Is it indeed granted after so much resistance! (*Takes her hand.*) Then let me hear you say so.

ELEONORE (*with emotion*).

I discovered, after a long and careful examination of my inclinations, that I felt more

than veneration for your highness, which hitherto I did not like to acknowledge; but now, after receiving the advice both of my friends and of my father, I must confess I cannot but agree to your wishes, and therefore give my consent to a morganatic marriage by a clergyman, as I heartily desire to show myself thankful towards you, which in future shall be the aim of my most anxious endeavours.

Enter Servant,—hands a letter to the Duke.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Wait. What, a letter from Zelle with a black seal! (*Glancing hurriedly through the letter.*) So my eldest brother is dead! (*To the servant.*) Have everything prepared for my immediate departure, omitting whatever is not strictly necessary. In half an hour I quit this place. The rest may follow,—but of my suite only one aide-de-camp and two servants travel with me. The others are to arrange my affairs here, and then commence their journey. [*Exit servant.*

ELEONORE.

A moment since, I was in hopes of living for some time happily in your highness's society;

(*shedding tears;*) but now you must leave me! Oh, what miserable days shall I pass until I am favoured with intelligence of your safe arrival at your residence!

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

This delay will not be very long: but I leave you, my dear Eleonore, something to comfort you. I desire that this (*presenting a document*) should remain with you as your property, together with this pocket-book and its contents.

ELEONORE.

Oh! your highness, with what means, and in what way can I make a return for all the kindness you bestow on me in so obliging a manner? Certainly—

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM (*interrupting her*),

You will love me, and become mine. I have now been some time acquainted with you, during which period I believe I have known you sufficiently well to esteem, love, and honour you. I must now add, that, in consequence of the death of my eldest brother, I shall make the place so distinguished in the possessions of my deceased brother, the seat of government; therefore urgent business will most likely prolong my absence per-

haps to two months. Then I hope to see you again.

ELEONORE.

I hope, indeed, then to see you again; but pray let me hear from your highness, and be favoured with a few words which you perhaps may find time to write, in a moment of leisure from your urgent and weighty affairs.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Yes, it shall be done. However, now we must part. But before I leave you, I have to inquire whether you are satisfied with the contents of the document I have just given you.

ELEONORE.

Oh, certainly—entirely. It is sure to contain not only all I could desire, but everything that could be thought of for my comfort—to display your kindness and benevolence.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Then open it, and read the contents *(pointing to a part)* from that place.

ELEONORE.

Why all your private fortune, let it consist of what it may, except some legacies, you have settled on me, should I survive you, which I trust Almighty Providence will prevent!

D'OLBREUSE.

How can my daughter and myself be sufficiently grateful for such munificence!

ELEONORE.

This is greater kindness than I could by any possibility have expected: I trust at some period to be enabled to show my gratitude by my deeds.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Farewell, until I see you again, which I hope will not be long.

SETTLEMENTS ON THE MORGANATIC CONSORT.

PYRMONT, 1672.

Duke George William and Eleonore.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

SOME difficulties have been mentioned to me that may in all probability arise regarding you and your children inheriting the domains of Dannenberg and Hitzacker, after my demise; consequently I have commissioned Grapendorf and Bülow,* to prepare everything requisite for my bequeathing Wilhelmsburg to you and your children, in lieu of the said domains, free from any apprehension of your being disturbed in its possessions.

ELEONORE.

You are continually conferring upon me new

* President of the Council at Zelle.

acts of kindness, when I have already to thank you for so many. Again I acknowledge your goodness as heartily as gratefully, in having once more extended your care of me and my daughter. By what means can I ever sufficiently acknowledge all your kindness?

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

In order that you, as well as our children and their heirs, may maintain exclusive possession of a separate estate, Wilhelmsburg, an island in the Elbe opposite to Hamburg, has been selected; and I have resolved to purchase the estates and possessions of all the noblemen there, as well as to liberate all the inhabitants from taxes and contributions. This will secure the future possessors of Wilhelmsburg, in lieu of the domains of Dannenberg and Hitzacker, from having to pay any sums in the shape of a contribution, and will avoid all future difficulties on that account. And if Wilhelmsburg is to be considered as a lordship, then you and your heirs may properly be styled counts and countesses—in respect to which this will be the first step to obtain such an object.

Enter BERNSTORF.

BERNSTORF.

A messenger brought this letter and waits for an answer.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM (*opens the letter and reads*).

My brother intends to send Platen to-day, and desires to know if everything respecting the arrangement of Wilhelmsburg has been prepared, because Platen† will soon be here. No answer can be required, as I expect all preparations are nearly finished, concerning which I wish you would make the necessary inquiries. But, as Platen is to remain in our palace, I request, my dear Eleonore, you will have the goodness to inquire if arrangements have been made for his visit. Bernstorf will accompany me.

* Then a Councillor, afterwards Prime Minister of the Duke of Zelle.

† Count Platen—at this time employed in a confidential capacity by the Bishop of Osnabrück.

THE LORDSHIP OF WILHELMSBURG.

[SAME PLACE, SAME DATE.]

Count Königsmark and Counsellor Bernstorf.*

BERNSTORF.

WALK in, Sir. Here we are left to ourselves, and here we may talk on all those things that apparently cause you such intense anxiety. Our Duke is at present occupied with his counsellors, who wait for his consent to an affair in which they have had a conference with Platen.

KÖNIGSMARK.

I should never have thought that the conveyance and deeds of an estate or country so small as the island of Wilhelmsburg, could have caused the creation of so many arrangements and delays, particularly as it is evident that the two illustrious brothers entirely agree in all their actions.

* The younger Count Königsmark, at this time a mere youth.

BERNSTORF.

Even should they agree in every respect, the formalities of ceding a domain, with all its privileges, require much consideration, in order to dispose of it as a property free from all burthens and taxes. Wilhelmsburg is one of the richest domains in all the Brunswick-Lüneburg provinces; and, should it descend to a female free of incumbrances and obligations, she would be one of the wealthiest heiresses in the north of Germany.

KÖNIGSMARK.

I should not, therefore, be surprised should princes even solicit her hand, or should the sovereigns of neighbouring states seek so desirable an alliance.

BERNSTORF.

I perceive some one coming, and expect to be favoured with an audience. Whatever you may have to tell must, therefore be postponed to a more favourable opportunity.

[*Exit Bernstorf.*

Enter STECHINELLY.*

KÖNIGSMARK.

Ah! Stechinelly! you can probably inform me

* Councillor in Zelle.

for what purpose are these great preparations, consequent on the agreement between the illustrious brothers respecting Wilhemsburg, which have been so frequently discussed, and as I have learned will be concluded this day.

STECHINELLY.

They can only prognosticate a betrothal, or a wedding, or a christening, or a birthday, or something of the kind, in which every one who has been invited will play a part.

KÖNIGSMARK.

A birthday it cannot be—neither can it be a christening or a wedding—because no child has been born, and there is neither bride nor bridegroom, who has attained an age at which a marriage could take place; but it might be a betrothal, though Mademoiselle Sophia Dorothea has not yet completed her seventh year.

STECHINELLY.

A most improbable conjecture! But you, young Sir, appear very inquisitive on such subjects. Have you any interest in the daughter of our Duke, who may expect so rich an inheritance as Wilhelmsburg?

KÖNIGSMARK.

I have no particular interest in the affairs of

Mademoiselle Sophia Dorothea; but everything that concerns her illustrious family is interesting to me, and therefore I ventured to make such inquiries, because I know the welfare of our sovereign and his family lies too near your heart for you not to desire for them every possible advantage; and also, because you must be well acquainted with these matters, or if not can readily obtain the information—therefore you can answer my question if you think proper.

STECHINELLY.

You young gentlemen appear marvellously interested for a little damsel so much your junior. Truly, some years hence, this could be better understood.

KÖNIGSMARK.

Excuse my inquisitiveness.

Enter BUCCOW.*

BUCCOW.

How busy every one appears to be in the palace preparing apartments: this is surely a sign of more visitors than usual being expected.

* The natural son of Duke George William and the Venetian lady, mentioned in a former page.

STECHINELLY.

Some visitors are shortly expected here, to sign and act as witnesses to the deed of gift of Wilhelmsburg to the consort of our Duke, and their daughter, and whatever other offspring they may have.

BUCCOW.

In that case only the children of Madame von Harburg* are to be considered.

STECHINELLY.

Certainly, these only—because it is intended to give them, instead of the towns and domains of Dannenberg and Hitzacker, a large domain free from all incumbrances. But on this account, it is said, considerable sums are also to be expended, in order to secure the consent of the Duke's brother. You will soon hear more on the subject.

[*Exit Stechinelly.*

BUCCOW.

Does it not appear to you extraordinary that to this girl so large a portion should be left, whilst no settlement should be made on me?

KÖNIGSMARK.

It is undeniably an admirable mark of parental

* The name assumed by the Marquise d'Olbreuse on her Morganatic marriage with the Duke of Zelle.

love in Duke George William, to live so savingly with his consort, in order to leave her and her children a handsome fortune. If Mademoiselle Sophia Dorothea remain sole heiress of this large property, she will soon attract the attentions of all the princes in the German empire.

BUCCOW.

Assuredly; and this shows, I hope, that my father will take care of me, by bequeathing to me a share of his private property—as he has recently promised—should I conduct myself agreeably to his wishes.

KÖNIGSMARK.

This must depend entirely on your behaviour. But now let us go and prepare for the festivities.

THE DUKE'S SECOND MARRIAGE.

ZELLE, 1675.

*Königsmark and Buccow.**

KÖNIGSMARK.

I HAVE for some time been expecting to meet you alone, in order to inquire if you have not perceived that many of Madame von Harburg's countrymen have risen to vast consequence since they have been so greatly patronised, and liberally rewarded. Fortune, indeed, has so favoured some of them, that they have obtained high military commands.

* Buccow by this time had entered into the military service of the Duke of Zelle.

BUCCOW.

Very true. In fact there is barely a majority of my father's countrymen over those of Madame von Harburg, holding high appointments in the army; and I have even been informed that the next troops to be sent against the French are to be commanded by Chauvet, who, since the battle of Gonsarbrück, and the capture of Marshal Crequi, appears to be in great favour, though his countrymen gained no fame near Engelheim.

KÖNIGSMARK.

Consequently there remain but faint hopes for our advancement in the army, so long as such favours are engrossed by others. I am very much inclined to enter another profession. You, however, as the offspring of the Duke, are sure to be taken care of.

BUCCOW.

Supposing this to be the case; still it goes against my feelings to be always under the command of the countrymen of Madame von Harburg, and to be obliged to treat them with a degree of consideration they do not, and probably never may, deserve, in the profession of arms.

Enter BERNSTORF.

BERNSTORF.

As you are entertaining yourselves, as I heard, with military affairs, I will inform you that matters still more important are to be discussed here on the arrival of Duke Anthony Ulrick, who is expected to follow Bishop Ernest Augustus. Scarcely ten days were suffered to elapse after the victory near the Moselle, and the taking of Treves, when both brothers, who there triumphed over their enemies, became very busy in concluding a marriage settlement. It is remarkable that family affairs of the greatest consequence should be arranged so closely upon the turmoil of war.

BUCCOW.

Of this I have been made acquainted, and that, notwithstanding the Morganatic marriage of our Lord in 1665, he is about to celebrate another with his consort, and that their daughter, Sophia Dorothea, is to be considered a princess by birth.

KÖNIGSMARK.

Consequently she is to be married to a prince?

BERNSTORF.

Probably. At least in the treaty of May 15th, 1675, some provisions have been made for such a marriage, as a natural contingency.

BUCCOW.

The articles of such an agreement must be exceedingly interesting. How can I be made acquainted with them?

[Bernstorf here enters into a long detail of the arrangements between the Duke of Zelle and the Bishop of Osnabrück, that were made for the purpose of enabling the former to enter into a legal marriage with the mother of Sophia Dorothea, the particulars of which will be found in the first volume of this work.]

BUCCOW.

The next of kin and the other relatives of the illustrious family, are they satisfied?

BERNSTORF.

They are. And now I hope I have explained everything, agreeably to your wishes. In consequence of these stipulations, the deed containing them has been signed by the two illustrious bro-

thers, and by Duke Anthony Ulrick, and all three will also this day sign the marriage contract, respecting which I have also something to arrange.

[*Exit Bernstorf.*

KÖNIGSMARK.

In all these explanations, the care and affection of our gracious Duke for his consort and her daughter are visible to every one. But it is remarkable that the latter is to be an exception in respect to all her brothers and sisters that may be born.

BUCCOW.

Notwithstanding I am the Duke's eldest son—though not born in wedlock—my name has not been mentioned in this agreement.

KÖNIGSMARK.

Yet I am sure you will be as well cared for as the Princess Sophia Dorothea, which is, considering the admirable character and well known kindness of our Duke, not more than might be expected.

BUCCOW.

It is that upon which I depend with confidence.

THE YOUNG PRINCESS.

ZELLE, 1675.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM *and* ELEONORE, GRAPENDORF *entering from the other side.*

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

COME, my dear Eleonore, before the marriage agreement is concluded, Grapendorf shall briefly explain to us the particulars, in order that we may make any alteration or addition that may be requisite. Let us sit down.

[*Duke George William and Eleonore take chairs.*]

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Now Grapendorf, proceed, in general remarks, to explain these arrangements.

[He proceeds to explain. His long dis-

course is omitted, the reader being already acquainted with all the particulars.]

ELEONORE.

Your comprehensive and paternal care, so prominently visible, will prevent all future difficulties, and our daughter, and myself, can only by untiring endeavours, show our acknowledgments.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Now let all speedily be prepared, that this contract may be signed and sealed this day.

[*Exit* GRAPENDORF.

ELEONORE.

As our daughter will in a few days attain the age of nine years, and appears to find pleasure in Königsmark's company, and as hitherto there has been no prospect of her marrying a prince, it would be as well if the Count should now commence his travels, he having remained here several years.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

This appears to be of no consequence, particularly as our cousin from Brunswick has already several times hinted that his eldest son might be married to our daughter, should he meet with a fa-

vourable reception. And that this will be the case I believe you have already perceived. But preparations for such a union with our daughter, when she is some years older, might perhaps not be amiss.

ELEONORE.

Certainly not. Our daughter would, if promised to a prince, be considered as a princess, since there is nothing to prevent such a union; a betrothal of her might take place, because I believe your illustrious cousin wishes her to be married very shortly to his eldest son.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Duke Antony Ulrick certainly has repeatedly hinted his wishes for such a union; but I have always replied that our daughter is too young, and therefore stated that it seemed advisable to wait some time before any promise were given.

ELEONORE.

However, should the Duke press the subject again, it might be to our daughter's advantage not to give him a negative answer, but to say his wishes should be fulfilled after a mutual inclination had made itself manifest.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

My dear Eleonore, you are too anxious about your daughter, though I must confess I am very little less concerned about her myself; still, when I consider she is not nine years old, and that the son of Duke Antony Ulrick is not twice that age, any promise appears premature.

ELEONORE.

Assuredly these are important considerations, particularly as those who are to spend their lives with each other, ought, before they are linked together, to have attained a sufficiently mature age to secure themselves from disappointment, and therefore only those marriages should be concluded that originate in mutual inclination. Considering, however, the large marriage portion our Sophia may expect, there can be little doubt of her attracting the attention of other princes. But, should our daughter, after being betrothed, not like the prince to whom she has been promised, and there exist no sign of a mutual inclination, then may such an intended union be annulled, a point which I think deserves some consideration.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Now you have communicated your ideas to me, that point certainly deserves to be further thought of.

THE FIRST BETROTHAL.

ZELLE, 1676.

Duke George William and Duchess Eleonore.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

You cannot but have perceived that Prince Frederick, by amusing himself so much with our daughter in his repeated interviews, appears to fulfil the intentions of his father, which the latter has now communicated to me.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Your observation I believe to be true, but our Sophy is still young to be interested with such things.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

She may be too young to marry; nevertheless,

it seems to me, after a few more interviews with the Prince, should both feel sufficient gratification in each other's society, that they might be promised to each other. Remember, too, that then she will be honoured as a princess by birth.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

It is plain you only wish to see your daughter a princess and a bride. And, Duke Antony Ulrick being my old friend, I am not aware there exists anything in opposition to your wishes, save that years must pass before the young people are married. And who can calculate on what may happen in the mean while?

Enter DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

I must profit by this opportunity of meeting you, my dear cousin, and your dear consort, in private, to inform you that I believe your daughter and my son seem to like each other; and that, to all appearance, they may become a happy pair. Therefore, if you and your consort have nothing to urge against it, I am quite agreeable to such a union.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

I do not see anything that may prevent it, except that our daughter is very much too young.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

So many betrothals take place in early life, that I must ask why your daughter, at her age, should make an exception. Tell me, my honoured cousin, what you think of it, especially as my son is about nine years older than your daughter.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

I must confess that, when young folks enjoy frequent interviews, and take pleasure in each other's society, and one willingly seeks to be a source of happiness to the other, nothing should prevent their betrothal.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

I am delighted to see that you participate in my opinion, and hope that if my son hazards his petition himself, he will meet with a kind reception. I expect to see him here soon, should it be convenient.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

By all means. You and your son are always welcome; the more especially if you come on any business that may strengthen the bonds of our friendship.

Enter PRINCE AUGUSTUS FREDERICK.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

Well, here is Prince Frederick. I have already mentioned your wish, it now only remains for you to repeat it in person.

PRINCE AUGUSTUS FREDERICK.

May I venture to ask the promise of the hand of your daughter, and if I am so fortunate as to find my hopes of her affection realized, let me request that a day may be fixed for the celebration of our betrothal.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

I will accede to your wishes with pleasure, as great as my desire for your happiness, when my daughter has attained a proper age. It will be as much to your advantage to be better acquainted with Sophia Dorothea, to see if such a union will contribute to your mutual happiness.

PRINCE AUGUSTUS FREDERICK.

Honoured aunt, I beg your consent.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

I completely participate in the Duke's intentions, and I am only fearful, in a betrothal so early, before my daughter can have known you sufficiently, and seen you as frequently as may be necessary, that

something may prevent your marriage. Besides, I am also desirous of discovering what may be concluded from her conduct towards you, as she appears to be much too young to have her head filled with such serious matters. Come and visit us frequently, of which I am sure the Duke will be glad. You may then, in due time, hear our resolution.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

But it is also to be borne in mind that marriages concluded for political reasons are not always the most happy; and in this regard it is likewise much better that you see more of our daughter before you hear our resolution.

PETTICOAT INFLUENCE.

HANOVER, 1680.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS (*proceeding to a table, where he arranges papers*).

IT will be requisite to inform my brother of the intelligence I have just received from the Prince of Orange, that assistance may be prepared for him, and that the union with Brandenburg may be concluded.

Enter DUCHESS SOPHIA.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

I am rejoiced to see you. This moment I intended asking whether you had any message to Zelle, as I shall be obliged to despatch a messenger thither immediately.

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

You must know that Duke Antony Ulrick arrives there to day. There is a rumour that he still does not intend to relinquish his intentions respecting some parts of the Lüneburg territory.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

This is the reason why he seeks alliances with all against whom I have or may have connected myself, or with whom I have not coalesced or assisted.

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

I shall send you a letter from your brother.

[*Exit* DUCHESS.

Enter MADAME PLATEN.

MADAME PLATEN.

In an affair that may be of the greatest importance to my gracious lord, I have ventured to solicit an audience, but I can make no excuse for presenting my humble requests if I have caused my gracious mistress to retire.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

My Sophy intends writing a letter, and then visiting her children. What news have you?

MADAME PLATEN.

It is concerning the presence of the Duke of Wolfenbüttel at Zelle, who either is there or will soon arrive there, and who seems desirous of profiting by every opportunity to obtain a share of the territories of his illustrious cousin at Zelle, which he apparently will never abandon.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

My cousin's transactions are certainly very disagreeable, though not entirely unknown to me; but what I heard is sufficient to have excited my attention. Do you know anything on the subject?

MADAME PLATEN.

I am sorry I know so little that could be of interest to my sovereign. It has been rumoured that Duke Antony Ulrick intends asking the wealthy daughter of the house of Zelle—probably the most desirable match in the empire—in marriage for his eldest surviving prince.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

This is somewhat extraordinary, because the first intention of betrothing my brother's daughter was left unaccomplished by the death of the eldest prince of Wolfenbüttel. I consider this suffi-

ciently ominous to prevent any immediate recurrence to a similar arrangement.

MADAME PLATEN.

Surely such an omen is entitled to some consideration; but Duke Antony Ulrick's power of persuasion is great, and it has already frequently been demonstrated.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

We must consider what is the best thing to be done.

MADAME PLATEN.

It might be made to appear, that the Crown Prince had not as yet demanded the hand of any princess, as heretofore rumoured, if Bülow were so informed, in order to communicate it to the Duchess, and that a marriage of the Princess Sophia Dorothea with her illustrious first cousin did not appear an impossibility. And if at the same time it were hinted to Bernstorf that it appeared beneficial for his sovereign to refrain from promising the hand of his daughter, it is to be hoped that the illustrious brother of your highness might possibly take this into his consideration.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

This plan seems likely to answer, but is it not too late?

MADAME PLATEN.

Not if a messenger be immediately despatched with the necessary letters, which I have provided. Such communications are now in preparation by my husband, and only want your highness's consent.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

I wish to see these letters.

MADAME PLATEN.

I expect my husband to send or bring them every moment.

Enter servant, hands the Bishop two open letters, and exit.

MADAME PLATEN.

Here they are already. May I anticipate for them your highness's approval? They are certainly very brief, but I presume they will answer the purpose.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS (*after examining both letters.*)

I grant my consent to everything, and even to sending the snuff-box set with diamonds. (*Writes a few words.*) Here is the order to deliver the snuff-box. (*Calls loudly.*) Here!

Enter a servant. He receives the two letters and the order.

Platen is to arrange everything as quickly as possible. [*Exit servant.*

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

By this you have afforded additional proof how greatly you regard the interest of my family and myself. There still, however, exists but a distant prospect of my brother's daughter with my son's want of inclination for her, which does not appear to have increased, and the young lady, as well as my brother's *madame*, does not seem favourably disposed in this affair. Nevertheless, it is undeniably the best policy to gain time for due consideration, and when we have tried all means in our power, the rest must be left to Providence.

MADAME PLATEN.

Without doubt. Where nothing has been neglected, chance will frequently contribute more to the accomplishment of our wishes than could have been expected.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

My brother's daughter having in expectation a considerable inheritance, many princes will be induced to seek her hand.'

MADAME PLATEN.

Only a few princes, however, visit the court of Zelle, and, if chance should bring others, the simplicity of the Duke's manner of living, compared with the splendour they will here witness, will cause Hanover to be greatly preferred to Zelle.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

Therefore it is my intention to embellish Hanover and its environs as much as circumstances will permit; after the completion of the riding-house here, the palaces of Montbrillant and Herrnhausen, and the orangery and hot-houses, I intend making other improvements. Will you accompany me and my Sophy to inspect the progress of the new buildings?

MADAME PLATEN.

I shall consider it the highest honour to be allowed to accompany her highness in a visit to these improvements. Generations unborn will bestow the highest praise, not only on the exploits of my gracious lord, both in peace and in war, and particularly in settling the differences between his two brothers, and other illustrious relatives, regarding the stipulation for promoting the welfare of the illustrious family, but also in

regard to the architectural monuments he has erected; and the name of the sovereign who originated and completed such admirable improvements must always be uttered with veneration.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

Our descendants and their contemporaries might judge differently from what we ourselves anticipate. Our intentions, however, are not entirely known, and the knowledge hid in the most secret folds of our hearts assures us of the praise of posterity. Let us seek the Duchess.*

* How the Princess Sophia Dorothea, or her mother the Duchess of Zelle, acquired the particulars of the foregoing confidential communication, does not appear, but they must have transpired in some way. The next conversation shows the result of Madame Platen's artful suggestions to her patron which the reader has just perused.

THE TRAITOR BRIBED.

ZELLE, 1680.

Duke George William, followed by the Duchess.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

IT is strange that my friend Duke Anthony Ulrick, who promised to visit me to-day, has not as yet arrived, and I have returned home, as there was no appearance of him on the road.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

From the balcony looking towards the Brunswick road, I have this moment perceived a carriage attended by some horsemen. I believe it is our friend and cousin from Wolfenbüttel.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

I hope it is, for I wish very much to see him as soon as possible respecting the Brandenburg affair.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Will Prince Augustus William accompany his father?

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

It is most probable that my old friend will be accompanied by his eldest son.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

I shall be glad to meet him again. As I have not seen him for some time, he will no doubt be altered for the better. Should he gain the favour of our Sophia Dorothea as completely as it was obtained by his elder brother, he might be betrothed to our Sophy, as well as inherit his father's territories.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

This might take place some time hence. Considering, however, the promise of having our daughter given to his elder brother somewhat more than four years since, when she was not nine years of age, and that the prince died of his wounds soon after the betrothal, I really am doubtful whether I ought to promise Sophy's hand again till she attain a mature age. It is, unquestionably, exceedingly disagreeable to have such intentions so unexpectedly thwarted and destroyed.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

This is most true. But if there be a mutual inclination, it evinces a happy prognostication, which might, as it appears to me, make the case worthy of being considered an exception.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

That may be: but it is also desirable to refrain from promising what may not be fulfilled, particularly where under similar circumstances an ominous foreboding has been made manifest.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

I cannot conceive what should prevent the accomplishment of such a promise. I think you had better go to our daughter, and now that she has attained the age of fourteen, I may prepare her for the expected visit.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

I should feel great pleasure in realising your ideas, should no obstacle intervene; still I must request you will not put anything in the child's head likely in any way to influence her mind.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

It is assuredly very wrong to mention to young girls ideas with which they ought not to become acquainted till they arrive at a mature age; and

I shall see that her attendants do not transgress in this way. Nevertheless, I shall feel an interest in observing how the young people conduct themselves towards each other. But a promise, to be kept from their knowledge, might, however, be given. [*Exit Duchess.*

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Some women seem very anxious that their daughters should early get married,—or at least they speculate about it and make arrangements for it long before the girl is old enough to think of such things.

Enter BERNSTORF.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

I am glad to see you. I should like to hear your opinion on a subject respecting which my Eleonore talks to me more frequently, perhaps, than pleases me. I must tell you, in confidence, that my friend and cousin will come from Brunswick to-day, with his eldest son; and, from the father's letters, it appears that he desires, if his son, a youthful prince eighteen years of age, and my daughter, his junior by four years, should be favourably disposed towards each other,

that they should be betrothed? What do you think of this affair?

BERNSTORF.

If their mutual inclinations promise stability, their betrothal cannot but promote their happiness; but though there may exist an affection between two persons when very young, it is impossible to say how they may regard each other in their riper years.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Consequently, I should think the time for promising them might very well be put off. A prince, however, of a neighbouring state,—particularly if known to us from youth for his excellent qualities and kindly disposition,—is always to be preferred. Yet if there should subsequently appear another, with whom the young lady was better pleased, and if the latter, at fourteen, would not refuse him, then if she had not previously been promised to the more desirable prince, the parents might perhaps be forced, against their own sentiments, to grant her wishes.

BERNSTORF.

This assuredly would prove an unpleasant business. But by all means the affair should first be

considered by the parents,—or more particularly by the father.

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.

A messenger from Hanover desires to speak to the Councillor.

BERNSTORF.

May I request permission to see him?

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Certainly.

[*Exeunt Bernstorf and Servant.*

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

I cannot imagine why Bernstorf should obtain from Hanover intelligence of such importance that it must be sent by a special messenger, who demands to see him immediately on his arrival. Assuredly there must be again such affairs as owed their existence to Louis XIV. I wonder when Bernstorf will return.

Enter BERNSTORF.

BERNSTORF.

A note from Madame Platen, from Hanover, confirms the rumour that the Crown Prince of

that state has not been to London for the purpose of marrying the English Princess Anne, and that he has not yet determined where to choose his bride. I have also received a very kind present from his Highness the Bishop.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Both these circumstances are agreeable to me, particularly the acknowledgment by my brother of your services. But to return to the subject on which I requested your opinion. What do you consider most advisable for me to do, supposing my cousin required my daughter to be betrothed to his son?

BERNSTORF.

In my opinion, such a requisition should not meet with a direct refusal; but, remembering the betrothal of the eldest Prince of Brunswick Wolfenbüttel, and his speedy melancholy death—which may be regarded as an omen threatening we know not what evil consequences—it appears most advisable not exactly to decline such a marriage, but to delay giving a decisive answer till the Princess shall have attained a more mature age, in order then to do what may be most desirable.

Enter DUCHESS ELEONORE.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

My dear Eleonore, Bernstorf agrees with me on the subject of our recent conversation, that, should my friend Duke Antony Ulrick request the hand of our daughter for his son, no decisive answer should be given until she attain a mature age, when she may be married as soon as convenient.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

I do not, however, perceive why, between friends, a decisive reply cannot at once be given, if the mutual inclination of the young people promise their future union.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Such inclination might point to that result; but to enter into an arrangement for such parties that must remain unaltered, whatever might influence their happiness during the whole life of our daughter, does not appear advisable. What do you counsel us to do, Bernstorf?

BERNSTORF.

Without a doubt, the happiness of children, especially such as are the descendants of princes, ought not to be trifled with, either in youth or during a more advanced period of life, and more particu-

larly such trifling ought not to be attempted at a time when, as it may be said, they are scarcely out of their cradles, and long before they have attained an age when they might be thought capable of judging for themselves on points of such importance. It is better to leave to them the fixing of their own inclinations, and then to act accordingly.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

But I should think a hope, in lieu of a promise, might be permitted, if inclination and other appearances are favourable to a union.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

It is rash to enter into promises or hold out hopes likely to be affected by accident or subsequent considerations, because they may be repented.

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.

Duke Antony Ulrick of Brunswick has arrived from Wolfenbüttel.

[*Exeunt Duke George, Bernstorf, and Servant.*

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

I regret to perceive that this time Bernstorf's advice will again be followed. Who knows to

whom my daughter may be united if his opinion is always to be demanded? But if it be solely for her happiness and advantage, I shall be content.

Enter DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM, DUKE ANTONY ULRICK, AND PRINCE AUGUSTUS WILLIAM.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Welcome, my dear lord and cousin; I am glad to see you and your son looking in such excellent health.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

Many thanks for your friendly welcome. My son has become a young man since his last visit here.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

We shall find great gratification in the remembrance of the past.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

But, in the first place, allow me to request that my son be introduced to the Princess Sophia Dorothea. I trust her not being here does not proceed from indisposition.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

I shall be happy to conduct the Prince Augustus William to her.

PRINCE AUGUSTUS WILLIAM.

The Princess will, I am confident, be greatly improved in accomplishments and other advantages since I last had the pleasure of meeting her, though even then her beauty and talent charmed every one.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Come with me, and you shall see.

[*Exeunt Prince Augustus William and the Duchess Eleonore.*

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

My Eleonore and the young folks will, I believe, be better pleased to be left to themselves.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

Certainly, young people are best amused when they are not under the eyes of their father, but with their mother. By the bye, this will be a capital opportunity for my son to renew his acquaintance with your daughter, and I dare say the young people will please each other.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

I hope they will try to do so.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

Assuredly, and if they fancy each other, my son might take the position of his deceased brother.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

An arrangement not impossible in due time.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

Then they might at once be betrothed.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

I should consider that premature.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

How is this? Has the young lady or have her parents already some one else in view?

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Though this be not the case, you should consider my daughter is as yet a child.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

A very slight obstacle, if the young couple like each other.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

That has not been decided, and to determine what shall be for the happiness of a child during her entire life, before she has attained years of discretion, is not likely to realize our expectations.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

That may be; but if even a formal betrothal cannot be allowed, the parents might give their promises to the same purpose.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Those promises should never be made which

it may be impossible to keep, or the fulfilment of which might be prevented by unforeseen accidents.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

To this I agree; but, according to all precedents, a promise might be given on certain conditions.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

You ought to be assured of my being agreeable to this union, should no obstacle intervene, as this was evinced by me in the first betrothal of my daughter. But Providence having thought it wise to prevent that marriage, I feel disinclined to prescribe rules to the will of Fate. We may at another time converse more freely on this subject. At present, it seems premature to be bound by a promise; but, as soon as my daughter shall have completed her sixteenth year, her consent may reasonably be expected, for the settlement of this question; till then it is impossible for me to come to a determination, as I greatly object to interfere with the rights of my child. If you please, we will go to our children, and see how they entertain each other.

[*Exeunt the two Dukes.*

Enter BERNSTORF.

BERNSTORF.

Well, I hope my advice will be followed. (*Looking at a snuff-box.*) Such gold boxes are very welcome, and still more the promise of enlarging my estates. I must show my gratitude to Madame Platen for this.

INTRIGUES AT HANOVER.

HANOVER, 1680.

Bishop Ernest Augustus, Duchess Sophia, Princes George Lewis and Maximilian, Madame Platen, Madame Busche,† Molcke,‡ Platen, &c.*

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS (*to Madame Platen*).

I HAVE been informed that you have had news from Zelle.

MADAME PLATEN.

A short time since, my husband informed me of something, in respect of which I venture to solicit my gracious sovereign's commands.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

Step aside with me a little from the com-

* Sons of the Bishop. † Sister of Madame Platen.

‡ Master of the Hunt to Ernest Augustus.

pany, if you have something for my ear alone. A few paces removed from them will suffice to convey your communication as privately as possible.

MADAME PLATEN. (*Taking the Bishop aside.*)

Platen has very recently received intelligence from Bernstorf at Zelle, by an express, that, in accordance with what he had learned from his sovereign, at the sixteenth return of the birthday of the Princess Sophia Dorothea, that is to-morrow, she will be betrothed to Prince Augustus William of Wolfenbüttel. This will be publicly announced, and the ceremony celebrated by a grand banquet and a magnificent procession. Duke George William will never break his promise, therefore it is high time to endeavour at once to secure to his gracious highness, the Crown Prince George Lewis, such a rich heiress as the daughter of the brother of my most gracious lord, inasmuch as it might still be the intention of your highness to favour such a marriage, in order that the possessions to be inherited might be consolidated in the family.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

My son has not evinced any particular inclination in that direction. Nevertheless, I should like

my brother not to give his word as yet, or to promise his daughter to another prince.

MADAME PLATEN.

But the Duke has promised to come to a decision to-morrow.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

Then assuredly no time is to be lost. But previously I must talk to the Duchess and my son on the subject. My dear Sophia, be so good as to give me your advice.

DUCHESS SOPHIA, (*approaching.*)

With pleasure, if I can but advise you for the best.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

Madame Platen has just told me that her husband has learned by an express that the Crown Prince of Wolfenbüttel will arrive to-morrow at Zelle, and that my brother will positively come to a determination with respect to his daughter on the same day, as also that this will shortly be declared and celebrated. Do you think Prince George feels any inclination for his cousin?

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

With respect to George's inclination for his

cousin, I think he finds her attractive and agreeable, but this cannot be termed love.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

Surely not; but, when we consider Wilhelmsburg, and the handsome marriage settlement, and also the sterling education of my attractive niece, it might possibly be anticipated that, should George get better acquainted with his cousin, and both obtain a more intimate knowledge of each other, a mutual esteem and regard must shortly be made manifest.

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

This might be. It is at least to be wished, and possibly much might be contributed towards it.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

When it is remembered that Wilhelmsburg and no one knows what other portions of the Lüneburg territory will be given with my brother's daughter, which otherwise might be separated from the inheritance of my brother's territory, a marriage of his daughter with my son seems to me most desirable. (*Addressing Madame Platen.*) Do you not think the Prince might be persuaded into such a purpose?

MADAME PLATEN.

Certainly. If the precedent of Duke Otho von Harburg, brother of Duke Ernest the Confessor, and his descendants, with all its particulars, be explained to him as a precedent: there the claims of the former and his heirs were entirely satisfied and settled; nevertheless, the latter acquired, after a lapse of time, considerable additional possessions after various countries had been inherited by other members of the family. Remembering what a valuable possession is Lüneburg, and supposing this obtained if the Princess Sophia Dorothea marry her kinsman of Wolfenbüttel, he may put forward new pretensions. In general the disadvantages cannot be seen which might arise from this union in respect to the Lüneburg territory and its appurtenances, which ought to be inherited by my gracious lord and his descendants.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

These are very weighty reasons for the union of my son with his fair cousin. Will you, my dear Sophia, represent the case to him, and then bring him to us?

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

With pleasure.

[Proceeds to Prince George, and conducts him to the opposite side, where she appears talking to him.]

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS. (*To Madame Platen.*)

I do not see, however, how we shall be able to induce my brother to refuse the request of the young Prince of Wolfenbüttel, the son of his old friend, and to promise his daughter to my son. For this purpose it would be as well for George to proceed early to-morrow morning to Zelle, in order to make his intentions known to his uncle.

MADAME PLATEN.

Possibly the Duke might then be induced to determine favourably. But should he previously advise with his consort or his daughter, the state of the case might be very different. The slight intimacy existing between the Duchess of Zelle and Prince George, as also between him and her daughter, seems not to allow the expectation of a happy issue to this affair,—besides which, the Prince has for a considerable time never visited Zelle, and some jests uttered by him having there

got into circulation, as mentioned some time since by Bernstorf to me, it seems best to have the proposals of marriage made by her highness. Her elevated mind, her knowledge and her virtues, which her illustrious brother-in-law appreciates and honours above those of all other women, allow of our anticipating a favourable result, should she propose the affair. It should also be remembered that, if the Crown Prince happen to arrive at Zelle later than the Duke of Wolfenbüttel, the Duchess will most probably have already persuaded both the Duke and his daughter. Furthermore, if the Duke of Wolfenbüttel should know better how to gain the mother's good-will and the daughter's inclination than your highness, a favourable result is not to be expected. But after a quiet night, when the mind is undisturbed by selfish influences, assuredly such an attractive discourse as that of my most gracious mistress must contribute greatly to the desired end.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

It is apparent, therefore, that my Sophia should travel early to-morrow morning with her son to Zelle.

MADAME PLATEN.

If the Duchess makes the journey alone, and not in company with the Crown Prince, and can obtain a private interview with her illustrious brother-in-law at Zelle, she will not be so likely to attract the attention of his Duchess, who may be inclined to exercise an unfavourable influence.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUUSTUS.

Then I am to endeavour to persuade my consort to travel early to-morrow morning alone to Zelle.

MADAME PLATEN.

Supposing my gracious mistress should leave this place very early, an accident might nevertheless cause some delay in her journey, or very possibly she might be preceded at Zelle by the Duke of Wolfenbüttel; or perhaps the Duchess at Zelle might previously have prepared or influenced her husband to embrace her own views, or the Duke might, as Bernstorf writes, independently of the valuable presents he is to give his daughter on her birthday, have consented to her marriage with the son of the Duke of Wolfenbüttel, who is so greatly favoured by her mother.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

On further consideration, it seems best that my Sophia should set off this evening, because, in consequence of the badness of the roads to Zelle, from six to ten hours are occupied in travelling thither with an equipage.*

[*The Duchess and her son approach.*]

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

Well, my dear George, what do you think of your mother's communication?

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

It assuredly appears advantageous for me to marry my agreeable French cousin. But will she give her consent? I also entertain some apprehensions that *Madame* has entirely different intentions. Besides, I do not like to make the proposals myself.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

What is your opinion, my dear Sophia, supposing you undertake the part of solicitor in this affair? I would myself travel to my brother, but his consort would become acquainted with my arrival, and might oppose my wishes; therefore it is

* A distance of little more than twenty miles; the roads must have been bad indeed to cause such slow travelling.

better that you set off for Zelle, to enable you to arrive there before the mind of my brother can be pre-occupied with ideas contrary to our plans. He has given his word that he will not settle the business of his daughter's marriage till the sixteenth return of her birthday. Do you think you could arrive to-morrow morning at Zelle so early that you might see my brother before he could speak to any one, and then you might confer with him without the knowledge of his consort, in order to obtain his promise? Because, if his lady should get acquainted with your intentions, she will without doubt try all means to defeat them.

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

I am very willing to travel thither, and arrange everything in my power. Will George accompany me?

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

I stated that I preferred stopping here. I should not like to have a refusal from the lady.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

Then you may remain here; and, my dear Sophia, every possible arrangement shall be made for your comfort. But Platen having informed me that my brother might very early in the morning

give his determination respecting his daughter, which he would never alter, it will be best that you arrive there before he leaves his chamber, or has an opportunity of conversing with any one.

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

It would be advisable, then, that I commence my journey to Zelle this evening, to arrive there as soon as possible after daybreak, because your brother now rises as early as six o'clock, or as soon as he can do without a light. But surely I am not to penetrate to his bed-room?

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

You will learn by inquiry when he is at his dressing-table, then you must knock at his door, and announce yourself as his brother's consort, and I am sure you will meet with a good reception. You know very well how highly he estimates your advice, and how much he admires and praises you on every occasion for your conduct. When all have failed to please him, and he will accept no one's advice, your words alone have been sufficient to influence and tranquillise him.

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

Dear Ernest, your praise is too great. I only

advise for the best, in accordance with the views I entertain of things. But to return to this affair. In what way do you think I should be enabled to have some private conversation with him, without the interference of his consort, in case she should be in the same room?

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

Should she discover your object, you certainly will not succeed. What is your opinion, Madame Platen? How could a strictly private interview with my brother be managed?

MADAME PLATEN.

It might possibly be advantageous to send an express to Bernstorf, who will find the means of ensuring this object. But, as the Duchess of Zelle does not understand Dutch, if the congratulations on his daughter's birthday be spoken in that language, it may be anticipated that, should the proposals be made in the same tongue, it might be taken as continued felicitations on the same subject.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

An admirable thought! But, my dear Sophia, you probably see more clearly into this affair, and will assuredly know what is best to be done to

secure our views. It is your wish, as well as mine, to see our children very happy, and you have on all occasions contributed everything to such a purpose. Shall I now, with you and George, make the necessary arrangements for your departure?

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

With pleasure.

[*Exeunt Bishop Ernest and Duchess Sophia.*

MADAME PLATEN (*to Prince George.*)

I have no doubt I may already, my gracious Prince, most heartily wish you joy on the favourable result of your illustrious mother's negociations. Princess Sophia Dorothea is really a lovely young princess, who will contribute everything in her power to the felicity of her future consort. The excellent education she has received under the eyes of her mother cannot but be expressly conducive to a happy marriage.

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

She may be as lovely as you say; but, having been educated by her mother, I believe she is not possessed of a very favourable opinion of me; and, if my name has by any accident been mentioned, I am certain it has been unattended with

praise from either mother or daughter,—although this may not have been noticed.

MADAME PLATEN.

Pray, my gracious prince, how could the consort of your father's brother mention you—in strict adherence to truth—unless in the most favourable terms, and as a Crown Prince whose valiant deeds in several campaigns have merited the highest praise? (*Madame Busche approaches.*) Are you not, sister, entirely of my opinion?

MADAME BUSCHE.

I not only entirely agree with my sister, but I am aware also that there can be but few princes not more than twenty-one years old who have distinguished themselves so frequently and in so praiseworthy a manner, by giving proofs of their gallantry and exhibiting their fearlessness of spirit, as your highness.

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

These are also praises which, pronounced by you, are so gratifying that it is almost impossible any one should hear them without pride.

MADAME BUSCHE.

If what I have just uttered sound like praise, it bears no comparison with your deserts as shown

by your spirited conduct on the 11th of August, 1675, at Consarbrück on the Moselle, at the siege of Treves, and the taking prisoner of Marshal Crequi in the campaign on the Rhine in the same year,—in 1676, during the siege of Maestricht,—in 1678, during the siege of Charleroi,—in 1678, in the battle near St. Denis, and on many other occasions. Parents possessed of such a Prince may well be proud of him.

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

I must acknowledge that, on the occasions you have mentioned, I have contributed all in my power to obtain a victory on the side on which I fought, but no one has ever rewarded me with such praises as you have just bestowed.

MADAME BUSCHE.

My dear Prince, you will assuredly not deny that, during your travels, not only your bravery but the counsel you gave in view of the enemy, was greatly approved of. You have also been generally praised for the attention you have paid to the arts and sciences, the most striking acknowledgment of which is your having, in the year 1680, a doctor's degree conferred upon you at Oxford.

[*By this time the company have retired to the back of the stage.*

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

Though your discourse sounds very delightful and the resources of language at your command seem inexhaustible, we must, nevertheless, return to the company, because my mother departs this evening, and my father will not return. But, before you go, I shall be glad to hear how you like my cousin at Zelle, and what you think of her.

MADAME BUSCHE.

The daughter of Duke George William is, undoubtedly, a lovely young princess, possessed of remarkable personal and intellectual attractions. She received an excellent moral education from her mother, who in her youth was one of the best educated young ladies of her time,—a distinction with which she managed to gain and preserve the love of her husband and the esteem of her inferiors,—from which it may be anticipated that the natural endowments of the Princess have been cultivated to win the admiration and gain the esteem of all who observe her personal, moral, and intellectual faculties.

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

She will be heiress to a considerable estate and other valuables, and also endowed with a handsome portion. The Prince of Wolfenbüttel, to whom she was promised, would have possessed with her a considerable fortune.

MADAME BUSCHE.

She is undoubtedly one of the richest heiresses in north Germany, and, as it is said, has had several offers. It is reported that the present Crown Prince of Wolfenbüttel will most probably ask her in marriage, or has already done so.

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

This would not be impossible. But it was the desire of my parents that I should ask for her hand; I, however, was disinclined to do so, and in consequence my mother has resolved to travel this evening to Zelle, because, to-morrow being the birthday of the Princess, and the arrival of the Prince of Wolfenbüttel being hourly expected, it might be too late if deferred till then.

MADAME BUSCHE.

Then, my dear Prince, I may hope to be permitted to congratulate you on your obtaining such a beautiful, wealthy, and illustrious bride. She

will appear at this court as the sun in the sky, throwing all the stars into the shade, surpass every one, and excite general admiration; and you, my Prince, may look forward to a most happy future.

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

This is to be wished. Nevertheless, I intend to hold my old friends and confidants in my remembrance, and you shall remain my friend as you have ever been.

MADAME BUSCHE.

Will the betrothal take place soon? and the marriage will, I have no doubt, be celebrated immediately afterwards, because the felicity in store for you in possessing a Princess so generally beloved, must be no less great than the happiness she must experience in becoming the consort of a Prince, who, for his gallantry in contributing to obtain victories, and in assisting in successful sieges, and for his familiarity with science, has been universally distinguished and admired.

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

I acknowledge my gratitude for these kind expressions; but allow me to remark that it is uncertain whether my mother's design will be accomplished.

MADAME BUSCHE.

Of that there can be no doubt, because one who possesses, as I may say, such omnipotence by her wisdom, her learning, and her goodness of heart, no less than by her exalted rank,—in short, an advocate so beloved as your estimable mother, cannot fail of success. Consequently, my gracious Prince, you will, I am certain, soon be in possession of a rich, young, and beautiful princess, distinguished not less for her personal than for her intellectual advantages. Then all old acquaintances must fall back—then will new lustre be given to this court—and your time be devoted to the happy one who may justly entitle herself your fortunate consort.

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

You depict a very happy futurity, but, as I have already said, nothing is as yet certain, and as all is but in perspective, much surely remains to be accomplished.

[*Prince Maximilian approaches.*]

PRINCE MAXIMILIAN.*

Do you know that my mother is going to start

* Younger brother of the Crown Prince of Hanover.

immediately, or has already set off, and that our father wishes to see you?

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

How rapidly time passes when one is agreeably entertained!

EARLY FELICITATIONS.

ZELIE.

Duke George William in a morning-gown, at a dressing-table—Duchess Eleonore in bed in an adjoining room—A loud knocking is heard.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Who's there? Who wants to disturb me?

Enter the DUCHESS SOPHIA.

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

Good morning! good morning! Your brother's consort wishes to be permitted personally to wish you many happy returns of the birthday of your daughter the Princess Sophia Dorothea. Allow me to be the first to offer these felicitations.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Good morning, my dear sister-in-law! You are sincerely welcome! I thank you most heartily; but you must have passed a very troublesome night in order to take me by surprise so early in the morning.

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

Many thanks for your kind reception. And the Duchess my sister-in-law, I would wish her joy on the happy return of your daughter's birthday.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM (*pointing to the open door*).

There she is.

DUCHESS SOPHIA (*turning towards the door*).

Many happy returns of this joyful day, my dear sister. I was anxious to show my sincerity by being the first to offer the usual congratulations on this happy occasion.

DUCHESS ELEONORE (*from the next room*).

Permit me to express my sincere thanks; but I am sorry you should have deprived yourself of your rest to get hither so soon, in order to pass a happy day with us.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

But, I pray, how is it possible you have been able to arrive here so early in the morning?

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

In order not to be deprived of the happiness of being the first in the field, I left Hanover late yesterday evening, and passed the night in my carriage to insure the object I had in view. My husband will, I hope, also arrive to-day.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

But I am exceedingly sorry that your rest should have been disturbed. I should have been equally well satisfied of your kind intentions, had you arrived later.

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

A night passed in my carriage, or in my usual place of rest, makes but little difference when a particular wish is to be obtained. (*Taking the Duke by the hand, and leading him as far from the open door as possible.*) I have a particular request to make to you, my dear brother. In my early arrival, and in my presence here preceding my husband, something is intended besides expressing a congratulation. But, before I can explain, let me venture to solicit your promise not to inform any one, without exception, of what I delay to state only till I have received your determination.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

If it be a matter on which I can at once decide, I give you herewith the desired promise; but, if it be of another character, I can only promise so far as I am able to assist you, and am willing to forward your wishes as far as lies in my power.

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

All I desire is this,—that you will give me your promise not to mention to any one else anything respecting the subject I am about to explain, until you have given me your answer yes or no; and that you will afterwards, with all your heart assist me in accomplishing what you promised, so far as it concerns your family and your subjects.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

To fulfil your wishes, I hereby promise. Here is my hand.

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

You have now agreed to keep to yourself what I am about to make known to you, until you have given me your answer. My dear brother, you know the country of my husband, though not very small, will some day or other be joined

with your own under one government, agreeably to the laws of primogeniture, and that everything respecting this has been settled between you and my husband. Considering, moreover, the assistance which has ever been rendered to the Emperor when required, and what might be accomplished on this point, it may reasonably be anticipated that the electoral dignity for a sovereign of both countries will not be refused; and, considering further the hopes of inheriting or acquiring the whole Lüneburg territory, for which all available means should be tried; the Prince who might govern the Lüneburg, the Hanoverian, and the Lauenburg territories, would become one of the most powerful in the German Empire. Again, if the differences between Denmark and Sweden be considered, particularly as regards the old dispute for the principalities of Bremen and Verden, which, to appearance only, was settled about three years since, it may be supposed that the sovereign of the three countries I have mentioned might, by applying proper means, flatter himself with the hope of possessing these disputed principalities. All these countries would form an important state, and when united, might be possessed and

governed by our children, should my hereditary Prince marry.

DUCHESS ELEONORE (*from the next room*).

My dear George! Will you not permit me to participate in your conversation?

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

For the present, my dear Eleonore, let us remain undisturbed, and keep in your chamber. You shall be informed of everything at a proper time. Continue, my dear sister.

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

To a sovereign of such important possessions, there is much greater prospect of a concession than could be expected by one less powerful, particularly if we consider the assistance rendered the Emperor in his wars against the Turks, who of late have made such considerable progress. By such services, and in various diplomatic transactions, it is possible that the possessions of such a sovereign might be still further augmented. But it would be a pity that the smallest part should be separated from this large territory, after the indivisibility of all the provinces, and whatever appertains to them, had been finally determined on, ever so trifling a deviation from which might pro-

duce considerable disadvantage. It would, therefore, be injudicious to have Wilhelmsburg separated from such a state. In this, my dear brother, I think you must agree with me.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

To all appearance this is undeniable.

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

Yet the inseparability of the whole might in every respect be maintained, should the request of my son George, to which mine and my husband's are joined, be gratified by our brother. My wish is that your daughter Sophia Dorothea should marry my eldest son. Who knows to what elevation a sovereign of a Protestant state may attain through my being descended from a King of England, as all Catholic princes and princesses are to be excluded from the English throne, and the more particularly because the Prince of Orange is so favourably disposed towards us. I, therefore, with the consent of my husband, propose my son's wish.

DUCHESS ELEONORE (*from the next room.*)

My dear George,—pray tell me what can the beloved Duchess have to say that appears so greatly to interest you, which assuredly were

I informed, would be very agreeable to me, and which, for my own satisfaction, I am very desirous of knowing.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

You shall very soon know. Pray do not interrupt us.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

I will not promise, I am not at all well! I find myself very uncomfortable!

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Continue, my dear sister.

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

I regret that my explanation should be so tiresome; but to be brief, I wish to know, in the name of my son, who has the consent of both his parents, whether you will approve of his marriage with your daughter.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

I consent most willingly, having long desired the welfare of my daughter and of my subjects; and being convinced that a large country can more readily provide for its government and sovereign than a smaller one: and I also wish the ties of brotherly love to be rendered as close as possible. These objects are secured by accepting your

proposals; therefore, I give my full and perfect consent to a marriage between your eldest son George and my daughter Sophia Dorothea, and also promise to contribute all in my power to realize your wishes on the subject in every particular.

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

Accept my most hearty thanks. Your hand and word stand security for the sincerity of your consent, and for accomplishing the desire of my husband, my son, and myself.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

But, my dear sister, would you not prefer, since you have been robbed of your night's rest, and now that you have so much delighted me, to retire to your chamber and obtain a little rest?

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

With pleasure.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Then be so good as to suffer me to conduct you to your room, and give the necessary directions.

[*Exeunt Duke George and Duchess Sophia.*

Enter DUCHESS ELEONORE.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

I should like to know what secrets her high-

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ness from Hanover has had to confide in Dutch, which language I do not understand, and to what they may have agreed. The arrival of the Duchess was much less expected than that of the Duke of Wolfenbüttel with his Crown Prince, and though it is so early in the morning, I regret I was not up; but, I hope, my dear George will soon return.

Enter DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Well, I must acknowledge, she is a most admirable Princess; with such repose and grace, and with so distinguished a manner, making requests that assuredly cannot be refused—even supposing that they might not at the commencement have met with my approval.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

But pray, now inform me, what affairs have you transacted so secretly—if I may be allowed to know them.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

The marriage of our daughter.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Can it be possible that my kind sister-in-law has come to be present at her betrothal?

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Most certainly; my brother and his son, her bridegroom, and others, will likewise arrive shortly.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Then the promising, which has been retarded for so many years, will after all take place to-day!

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Undoubtedly; but we must now think of preparing Sophia Dorothea, that she may be presented in a becoming manner.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Oh, she will have guessed it by the preparations, that cannot have remained unknown to her.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

This seems quite impossible. I have myself been made acquainted with the affair only this morning, and have but just given my consent. How is it then possible that she could previously have guessed it?

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

She is aware of part of the preparations; and the expected arrival of Prince Augustus of Wol-

fenbüttel cannot have remained unknown to her.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

In order to be present when our daughter is betrothed to Prince George Lewis?

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

How! What! Why! Prince George Lewis of Hanover?

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Undoubtedly, dear Eleonore. This day is the happiest of my life! Only consider the Hanoverian and Lüneburg territory united, most probably with the addition of that of Lauenburg—to which at some future time may also be added the principalities of Bremen and Verden; and the whole will be governed by our children, in accordance with the rights of primogeniture settled in 1680, and they will most likely pass their lives as great sovereigns!

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

I am amazed! Have you really promised our daughter to Prince George Lewis of Hanover. Just consider what Prince Augustus must say, who now for more than two years has been expecting your acceding to his request. Consider all

that your old friend, his father, Duke Antony Ulrick, will think. My head swims as I reflect on it. And such a sudden change! Dear George, let me venture to hope you have not positively given your word, but, as in the affair respecting Duke Anthony Ulrick, you required some time for consideration. Regard the happiness of our only child, our greatest treasure and joy. Consider what the court, what the world will think and say of it. You have always encouraged the hopes of Prince Augustus, although you have never given him a decisive answer; but now, his endeavours and prospects are at once to be suddenly destroyed. This you cannot possibly intend. Consider your dear daughter; you will not surely promise her without her consent? Consider her happiness for life. You will not, I dare hope, consent to a marriage, from political reasons —not originating from mutual inclination, but desired only from motives of policy. Pray how long a time have you demanded for consideration?

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

In an affair so advantageous, which is not only for our daughter's benefit, but for the welfare of

the country, I have not asked any time for consideration, but immediately gave my consent.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

No time allowed for considering so important a matter! But the consent of the mother and daughter are still wanting. Do you not perceive it was intended to take you by surprise, and that you have been caught? Therefore, I dare hope you have not promised my consent?

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

This I have not promised.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

But I interrupted you in your conversation with the Duchess several times, in order to be acquainted with the affair you were discussing. Why did you not inform me of it?

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Because I had, in the first instance, made my sister a promise not to make any one acquainted with the affair until I had given her a decisive answer. And I have also promised to do all in my power to fulfil my promise regarding the betrothal and the marriage of our daughter.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Consequently you have also promised my consent without having it.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

I have only promised it, provided I should be able to obtain it from my dear Eleonore.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

My dear George, you know that I have never opposed your wishes: but, in a transaction of such vital consequence both to my child and myself, I again request you most urgently to endeavour to alter this.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

I have pledged my word, and given my hand upon it, and cannot by any possibility retract.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Then may Providence grant that all may be for their mutual benefit. Nevertheless, I have a foreboding—because marriages caused by political reasons are not fortunate—that no lasting happiness can be expected.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Your anticipations have, I must say, been realized in some instances, but in this I request you will dispense with them. It is the most happy accident that has occurred to me during my whole life.

(*Voice from without.*) "His highness the Bishop, and the Crown Prince of Hanover."

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

There is my brother and the bridegroom already arrived. I must prepare to receive them.

THE INTERRUPTED SPOUSALS.

ZELLE, 1682.

Bishop Ernest Augustus, Prince George Lewis, and Bernstorf.

BERNSTORF.

His highness the Duke is dressing, and will be here shortly. He was surprised this morning at six o'clock by the Duchess Sophia, who arrived a little earlier from Hanover.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

Has my consort been conversing with my brother?

BERNSTORF.

Yes; they have had a long conversation in the Duke's dressing-room.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

Was the Duchess present?

BERNSTORF.

She was in the next room, but remained in bed; and the Duke was occupied at his dressing-table.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

Then most probably my consort has failed in her object. Will the Duke of Wolfenbüttel and his son arrive here to-day?

BERNSTORF.

Arrangements for their reception have been made.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

Does my brother know I have arrived? Pray inquire.

BERNSTORF.

He has been informed of your highness's arrival. [*Exit Bernstorf.*

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

It would be surprising if all our precautions should fail in producing the desired effect.

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

In such a case, I should proceed immediately to Hamburg. Nevertheless, everything being so

quiet, and not having as yet seen my mother, I still believe my fair cousin will consider my parents' wishes which, now that I have weighed everything, are also mine; and therefore I shall wait patiently to see my uncle.

Enter DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Welcome, my dear brother! Welcome, my dear nephew! Both of you have risen earlier than we are accustomed to do at Zelle.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

Accept my hearty thanks, my dear brother. But, in the first place, receive my sincere felicitations at the return of the birth-day of your daughter; and may it return many times.

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

To which, let me also add, my hearty congratulations.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Many and heart-felt thanks for your kind and friendly wishes! Your consort has already congratulated me, and informed me of your wishes. I really must acknowledge, my dear brother, I place the fullest confidence in your accomplished

and admirable Duchess. I never knew a princess who so greatly excited my admiration by her charming conduct and agreeable conversation.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

You almost make me jealous. But, pray, have you been informed by the Duchess of my son's wish; and have you given your decision?

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Everything has been represented to me in a manner so singularly attractive, I must have been possessed of a heart of stone, had I not immediately consented to consider your son mine—more especially as he in due time will succeed to our territories; and, in consequence, I most heartily wish you joy.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS AND PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

Accept my best and warmest thanks.

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

Has the Duchess told you all my particular wishes; and my desire of cementing our brotherly friendship by a marriage of your daughter with my son?

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Yes, I have been informed of everything; and

intend to make such arrangements as may enable your son to marry as soon as he pleases. My daughter shall bring you a fine fortune.

[The Duke explains his arrangements in favour of his daughter, with which the reader is already acquainted.]

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

These are things of secondary importance, that may be expressed by our counsellors, with the usual formalities, in the necessary documents, which will of course be signed by you and myself, your daughter and my son.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

I only mention them as a proof of my entire satisfaction in beholding the union of our children, and to show that I am willing to do all in my power to fulfil the wishes of my forefathers. But, if you please, we will now go and partake of breakfast, with my daughter, your consort, and mine.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

BERNSTORF (*entering*).

Well, then, this has succeeded, and if the entire Lauenburg province can also be obtained and united with the Hanoverian and Lüneburg terri-

tories, I have hopes, as long as Platen lives, to become one of the chief councillors, and afterwards the first.

(*A voice without.*) "The Duke of Wolfenbüttel and his son."

Enter DUKE ANTONY ULRICK *and* PRINCE AUGUSTUS WILLIAM.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

There are so many carriages in the court-yard, that probably the sovereign Duke of Hanover is here. Has Duke George been informed of my arrival?

BERNSTORF.

He has, a few minutes since, retired, with his brother and nephew, to join the Duchess and the Duchess Sophia at breakfast, but he will be here immediately. I will inform him of your Highness's arrival. [*Exit Bernstorf.*

PRINCE AUGUSTUS WILLIAM.

If, after all, we have come too late, as I feared and observed to you!

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

That is impossible.

Enter DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Welcome, my dear old friend and cousin! Welcome, my dear Prince! We have been expecting you some time. My brother's consort arrived here before six o'clock, whilst I was in my morning-gown, occupied at the dressing-table, and my Eleonore not yet risen.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

We have come to congratulate you on your daughter's birthday, and to wish many happy returns, and also, my dear old friend, to hear your decision respecting the union of your daughter with my son; which, before we join the company, perhaps you will be so good as to inform me, agreeably to your promise.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

My daughter will this day celebrate her betrothal to the Crown Prince.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

With which Crown Prince?

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

I intended mentioning my brother's Crown Prince; and I am very happy, since this arrangement has only been settled this morning, that you

should have come with your son to be present at these festivities. Now let us go to the ladies.

Enter Bishop Ernest Augustus, Prince George Lewis, Duchess Sophia, Buccow, Stechinelly, Bülow, Grapendorf, Platen, Duchess Eleonore, and Princess Sophia Dorothea.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Here comes my daughter!

BISHOP ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

And here is my son.

[*The Parents and then the Company offer their congratulations.*]

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

But where is my old friend, Duke Antony Ulrick, and his son?

STECHINELLY.

He passed by the apartment, saying he had forgotten something.

BERNSTORF.

I believe he is resting in his apartments after his fatiguing journey.

BÜLOW, [*to Grapendorf*].

Is it not singular that a few hours can produce so remarkable a change?

GRAPENDORF.

It is scarcely possible to understand how everything can have been altered in so short a time.

BUCCOW.

Our Duke is usually so thoughtful and considerate in settling anything,—particularly in important affairs.

Here concludes the first portion of these Conversations. It affords us a very animated picture of the rival Courts of Zelle and Hanover, and gives an insight into the intrigues which the Platen *clique* had begun for the purpose of maintaining a bad influence over that sovereign prelate, Ernest Augustus, and his hopeful heir, which were afterwards to be employed with such fatal effect against the peace of the young Princess, betrothed to the latter under the very unsatisfactory circumstances that have been just described.

DIARY OF CONVERSATIONS.

PART II.

THE MARRIAGE.

A MORNING VISIT.

HANOVER, 1685.

*Enter Princess Sophia Dorothea, and Mademoiselle Knesebeck.**

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

IT is advisable that we receive Prince Charles and Count Königsmark here. I could not receive them in my son's room because he requires rest.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

Prince Charles will certainly tell us something interesting that he met with in his travels.

* Lady in Waiting to the Princess.

Enter PRINCE CHARLES,* AND COUNT KÖNIGSMARK.

PRINCE CHARLES.

I bring you here my friend Königsmark, who also wishes to pay his respects to you, and to be permitted to inquire after the health of the little Prince.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

He is, I am delighted to say, tolerably well. He requires to be kept quiet, and daily increases in size and health.

PRINCE CHARLES.

Others, as well as myself, admired very much the beautiful diamond ornaments that the Countess Platen wore yesterday.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

If all the stones upon the ornaments she displayed yesterday are real diamonds, their value must undoubtedly be very great.

PRINCE CHARLES.

Notwithstanding the costliness of her dress, it did not become her so well as the simple attire she wore some days ago, in which great care and nicety were visible.

* One of the younger brothers of the Crown Prince of Hanover.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

The superb dresses that here may frequently be seen, were never to be met with at my father's court, and the most splendid of those worn by the Countess Platen are more costly than any possessed by my mother-in-law, although her rich and exquisite dresses excite such general admiration.

COUNT KÖNIGSMARK.

The Countess Platen is said to have lost some of her diamonds from her dress, and I have been so lucky as to find two to return to her. Here they are.

PRINCE CHARLES (*examining them*).

They possess much lustre, and display beautiful colours, but this one does not appear so brilliant.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

You, Count Königsmark, have frequently conversed with this lady. Of course on very interesting subjects.

COUNT KÖNIGSMARK.

She directed her inquiries towards the Court at Zelle, to know if it was as brilliant as the Hanoverian Court, and if there appeared there dresses as numerous and magnificent as I had

seen here. When I told her my opinion on this point, she agreed with me, and replied that the simple life of a country town seemed there to be preferred.

PRINCE CHARLES.

But surely the same intrigues are unknown there that afford here such ample materials for conversation. Here splendour is exhibited whilst there the money expended on such things is better employed.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Certainly, people pass their time there in a much more simple and quiet manner than here, though amusements, such as plays, balls, and other entertainments of that class may also be met with at Zelle. Whatever appears there so simple, is displayed here with unusual splendour.

PRINCE CHARLES.

But it requires a much greater expenditure; therefore it is still undecided whether the Court at Zelle or at Hanover is to be preferred.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Each has its advantages and disadvantages. But you, my Lord Count, were about telling me your conversation with the Countess Platen.

COUNT KÖNIGSMARK.

She observed the dresses of all the ladies who approached her, and asked my opinion respecting them. Perceiving that I sometimes apologised for trifling defects, or failed to criticise them with sufficient severity, she interpreted it as holding such persons in particular estimation, and found out I amused myself with many, without displaying a preference for any one in particular, which showed, she added, that I lived the life of a butterfly. Thanking her for such compliments, though not very well satisfied with them, I requested that she would apply such eulogies to others, and that she would remember that my manner of thinking and acting were not to be judged by the question of the greater or less attractiveness of a dress. She replied that I appeared most amused with such remarks when in company, in order to know the value of ladies' ornaments, but that I ought to be careful this did not get known,—at least that it did not come to their knowledge, which, possibly, was the reason I had not made more agreeable observations. I observed, subsequently, I had not ventured upon any remarks on the dresses of the ladies

till she had commenced this discourse, and that she had criticised every one near her. She replied, she ought also, as it appeared to her, to have been the object of my remarks had I observed attentively every one who had approached me. To this I could only answer with extravagant compliments, with which she seemed exceedingly gratified, and presently was evidently still more so, as she continued to reply to me in the same style, dilating on the superiority of her dresses to those of every one in the room. Our conversation became very lively, when she was suddenly called away to take a hand of cards with her sovereign.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Then I am sure you ought to have been exceedingly amused by the remarks of the Countess Platen.

COUNT KÖNIGSMARK.

She is certainly a lady who knows how to make herself very entertaining, but she posssesses so sharp a sting as to render it necessary to be very cautious in her company.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Everything is arranged I hear in the most splendid style in her house; added to which, an

extensive establishment in the most costly liveries and a prodigious quantity of plate give every appearance of her maintaining a court of her own.

COUNT KÖNIGSMARK.

It really is astonishing to see all the exquisite things in her mansion. It is evident to me that the courts of many of the German princes do not exhibit the magnificence she displays in her house at every assembly.

PRINCE CHARLES.

Will you accompany me in an excursion on horseback to take advantage of the beautiful weather.

COUNT KÖNIGSMARK.

With pleasure.

[*Exeunt Prince Charles and Count Königsmark.*

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Let us also take an airing in the carriage. I believe it will be here soon, as I ordered it half an hour ago.

THE SOVEREIGN AND HIS MINISTER.

HANOVER, 1685.

Ernest Augustus writing at a table.

ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

MY excellent and amiable brother, I am sorry to say, suffers himself to be led a little too much by his lady.

Countess Platen entering with a letter.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

This letter is additional confirmation of what I have already mentioned to your highness. The influence of Bernstorf in all matters of government, and even in family affairs, is at present secure insomuch that he has almost all things referred to his opinion. Here is a letter on this very point.

ERNEST AUGUSTUS (*reading.*)

I am surprised at the contents, but am glad Bernstorf has shown himself so firm in this affair.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

I always expected it, as I said some time since. But, to be perfectly sure of Bernstorf, it is still most advisable to show him favour by gratifying his chief wish as to increasing his estate. Though hitherto he may not always have shown himself sufficiently opposed to the interest of the Duke of Wolfenbüttel, he will speedily perceive the advantage of conducting everything for the benefit of the brother of his sovereign.

ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

Although Bernstorf has ever shown himself well-inclined towards my intentions respecting the harmony of the decrees in Hanover and Lüneburg, nevertheless the result has not always answered my expectations.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

He, having attained the situation of first councillor of his sovereign, will assuredly maintain himself in it; but having a powerful opponent in the Duke's consort, besides others entirely devoted to

her, whom he has to counteract, it is necessary for him, in order to attain his ultimate object, to give way a little, that his ideas may in some degree harmonize with the advice of those whose opinions so decidedly deviate from his own. In consequence of this his transactions are attended with greater difficulty, particularly when something is to be done by him in opposition to the spirit of preceding ordinances, or when the mind of the Duke has been prepossessed by individuals high in his favour.

ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

I very well perceive the difficulty of Bernstorf's situation, and believe it would be to his advantage if his ardour could be guided by careful considerateness.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

If Bernstorf had some one to assist him, who could make the intentions of the Duchess approach his more closely, his advice would be thought of more importance, and the interest of the Duke of Wolfenbüttel would suffer. Towards this object the daughter-in-law of my sovereign might greatly contribute. All the praises bestowed upon her by you will never [illegible] by her, and

she hears them repeated with intense pleasure, which might be made to advance your wishes.

ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

My opinion is, that women are not able to understand or to act with sufficient decision, and have not the firmness of men, but must be led by them —(in this respect I have always admired you as an exception)—therefore in politics they must be left entirely out of the question. Added to which, the *Madame* at Zelle does not like to have it perceived that she cannot place entire confidence in me. I doubt this is the case with her daughter, and doubt too, that, by her co-operation, anything mutually advantageous to my brother's court and my government can be attained.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

Some doubts may arise in considering this, still, when it is remembered how much influence the Princess possesses over her father, who has but one child, an only daughter, to care for, it is apparent something might be obtained with her assistance. Besides, she has many friends at her father's court, who may be serviceable to her, and here is your serene highness, her first protector and friend. If all this be considered, she as-

suredly may be biassed in the way most desirable, particularly if her old friend here, Count Königsmark, be inclined to contribute his aid to the same end.

ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

Königsmark, by all means, must not be informed of my intentions. He has too many friends at Zelle, and here only new acquaintances who appear, moreover, to regard only his ever well-filled purse, that provides so many things attractive to his associates.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

Königsmark is on very friendly terms with the Princess, by whose recommendation his offers to enter the service of your highness were accepted. He relieves her from every burthen, and might be useful in this way. Two days ago, he met the Princess in the morning on the staircase, and offered to take the Prince from her arms, pretending that the beautiful child, though little more than two years old, would be too heavy for her to carry up stairs. She kept the infant close to her bosom, but smiled, and ultimately consented to the proposal: he took the Prince from his mother's arms.

ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

Did you see this yourself?

COUNTESS PLATEN.

Though not an eye-witness of it, I heard it related very merrily by Prince Charles, who was present when it occurred, and even ridiculed Königsmark, who entered the moment after the Prince had told me.

ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

Consequently several persons saw Königsmark taking the Prince up stairs.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

In addition to Königsmark and the Prince, a nurse and two female servants were present.

ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

Oh, then, all that has been told you was only a jest.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

This may be. But the smiling of the Princess, and the particular manner in which Prince Charles spoke of the occurrence, excited my attention. To this must be added the innumerable attentions paid by Königsmark to the Princess, which your highness must surely have perceived; because, in every company in which they meet, their conver-

sation lasts longer and is more animated than when the Princess or Königsmark choose to converse with others, and for this reason the occurrence I have mentioned has been much talked of.

ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

The long conversations you have alluded to are quite natural, because Königsmark is the oldest acquaintance of the Princess's at my court. On this point remember how much gratification it affords me to maintain a conversation with a distinguished lady. I therefore cannot discover anything amiss in the consort of my son talking to an old acquaintance. And I am sure every one who pays any regard to the strict propriety of my daughter-in-law, and her perfectly moral education must acknowledge that no particular meaning could be attached to the civility of Königsmark in taking the Prince from her arms, and carrying him up stairs. Besides, I am the more convinced in my opinion when I consider how happily she lives with her husband, with whom she appears to be more intimately united since his return.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

Certainly it appears so, regarding which every

one heartily rejoices, though, before the departure of the Crown Prince, some coolness in each towards the other was observable.

ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

This conversation has brought us completely from the subject on which we were at first engaged. But, to return to it, I confess it will be best to endeavour to retain Bernstorf by making it most to his interest to benefit my government. Pray inform your husband I want to converse with him on this subject.

[*Exit Countess Platen.*

ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

She is undoubtedly a remarkably clever woman; this, in conjunction with her beauty, makes her deserving of favour. If, however, all her actions are considered, she also appears to be a woman who may become exceedingly dangerous. Though this might effectually be guarded against, it is greatly to her advantage to take the most particular care of my interest and that of my family; in which respect she has already rendered me important services, and may still become very useful. Besides, every true and honest servant is deserving of recompense. Perhaps she may some

time hence become of great service to me,—as, for instance, in regard to the electoral dignity; and who knows what may be attained, since the last conversation of the Prince of Orange, as the true friend of my brother, and Leibnitz, respecting the descent of my Sophy as the granddaughter of James I., because it appears certain that Charles II. will leave no legitimate heirs,* and his brother James, the cousin of my consort, should he come to the crown, seems, like all his relatives, too favourably disposed to the Catholic religion to retain his rights and maintain his authority many years on the English throne, to which his daughters and his nephew will assuredly first succeed. I shall, however, hear the opinions of Liebnitz.

* Charles II. died on the 6th of February in this year.

PLOTTING AND SCHEMING.

HANOVER, 1687.

Princess Sophia Dorothea and Mademoiselle Knesebeck.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

I AM glad to find myself better, and expect to-day to take a carriage airing again. Remember that I have been obliged to keep my room during almost four months.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

The fine weather, which induces every one to take advantage of it, will also contribute to your highness's complete recovery. The little Princess may also take a carriage airing, which, as the physician stated, would be beneficial to the fine and healthy child.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

If not too cold; soon after mid-day I think would be more favourable to my little dear, because she is little more than three months old, and I dare say it might be better for her to ride in a carriage, on the lap of her nurse, than to be carried in her arms for an airing.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

The Crown Prince, who met his daughter yesterday, was greatly rejoiced by her healthy looks, and perceived that she had altered considerably for the better.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

It appears that he takes frequent walks, and has to transact urgent business; because, during the past three months, he has only been seen daily once or twice in my apartments, and then only for a very short time, because he professes always to have affairs of importance to attend to since his return from Hungary.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

Probably the Crown Prince believes your highness requires quiet; besides which he has, as I have been told, a great many affairs to attend to. He is daily occupied several hours at his writing

table; added to which the property he has received in the province of Hoya, and the domains there appertaining to the Hessian lands within the boundaries of that province, will, if he intends to arrange everything, and, as is reported, maintain the rights of its subjects, occasion his spending considerable time on these affairs.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Pray is it true that Madame Busche, although her husband has been buried but a few months, intends to marry General Weyke?

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

It is generally reported as a settled thing, but I know nothing certain respecting it.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

I suppose she does not like to partake of the festivities of the court as a widow, because her mourning dress does not appear to her so attractive as that of a young general's consort.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

This may be a reason for her speedy marriage. Her sister, who appears to be her principal adviser, will, I dare say, so arrange the matter, that this union, which has been so much discussed, will shortly take place.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

I believe the Countess Platen intends paying her visit this morning. But if she does not arrive soon I shall not wait for her.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

She promised to be here by this time.

Enter COUNTESS PLATEN.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

Permit me to inquire after your highness's health, and that of the dear and truly beautiful little Princess, as well as after the charming Prince, who becomes every day more and more the admiration of all who see him.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

My health daily improves, and I intend to take an airing to-day, invited by the beauty of the atmosphere, which is likely to be conducive to my perfect recovery. My dear little daughter continues to increase in size, and is also to take a ride. The Prince is well, and already out.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

I had the honour of meeting the Crown Prince on horseback, in company with several persons anxious to profit by the fine weather.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Pray who were with him?

COUNTESS PLATEN.

Several ladies and gentlemen. The Prince rode by the side of Mademoiselle Schulenburg. My sister and General Weyke were also of the party.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

I suppose I may wish you joy on their intended union?

COUNTESS PLATEN.

In acknowledging my gratitude for your obliging wishes, I believe I may assert that my sister will soon be united to the General.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Is the day for celebrating their union already settled?

COUNTESS PLATEN.

It depends on circumstances, and has not yet been fixed.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Will the celebration take place here?

COUNTESS PLATEN.

On an estate belonging to the bridegroom, but in this neighbourhood. Only a few selected from the relatives and friends will be invited. Never-

theless, the Crown Prince has been pleased to permit us to hope for the honour of his company, as also that of his brother; and, might I venture to expect that your highness would accept my humble invitation, I would venture to present it, because on this very point I have been commissioned to learn your commands.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

I am sorry to be obliged to decline the invitation, which, however, I do with as much regret as I should feel pleasure in being present. My health, though nearly restored, has left so much weakness as not to permit such enjoyment,—therefore I am forced to renounce it.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

But, supposing that the celebration should be delayed, might not then the betrothed couple flatter themselves with being honoured with the presence of your highness?

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

This might be more possible, but, flattering as it is to have such a festival put off on my account, I am fearful I shall not gain sufficient strength in a few days to be enabled to accept your kind invitation. I therefore must request you will allow

me to state my acknowledgments of your courteous proposal, as also how much I regret being obliged to decline the invitation. Besides, I should not like to be absent from my children, even for a few hours, whilst such dangerous contagious infantile disorders prevail as have proved fatal to several.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

My sister, as well as General Weyke, will be very much disappointed, because they anticipated preparing some happy hours for your highness.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

I gratefully acknowledge this. But there are not many of the bride's relations here except yourself and your husband.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

In consequence of which my sister will invite some friends; for instance, Mademoiselle Schulenburg as one of the bridesmaids.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Mademoiselle Schulenburg! It seems, that though scarcely arrived at this court, she shares in all its festivities; and particularly is sure of favouring the company with her society wherever my husband appears.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

Such a charming and innocent girl, scarcely twenty years old, who attracts the attention of so many persons by her beauty and agreeable manners, cannot be beheld without pleasure by the Crown Prince.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

This also has been reported to me by several; at court too much has been said on the subject; and I must say I have similar information almost daily.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

There can, however, be no reason whatever for jealousy, when a Prince is possessed of a consort so generally admired for her mental and personal endowments, and as generally appreciated. But it is certainly excusable should the Prince sometimes like to be entertained by another lady.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

The inclination of the Crown Prince to entertain himself with Mademoiselle Schulenburg is well known, and though the high praise you bestow on the consort of the Prince cannot be applied to me, I must acknowledge that what you have just stated excited my attention; particularly as I have seen

the Crown Prince but very seldom during the last three months.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

I am extremely sorry if the few remarks I have made have given rise to the impression your highness appears to labour under. I should never pardon myself, if what I merely hinted, gave you the slightest cause of uneasiness, and I should feel very unhappy, if I, in my innocence of evil, alluded to anything which might have such a tendency.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Do not be sorry for it. What you have hinted I have long since guessed. But though I have declined your invitation, I do not hinder Mademoiselle Knesebeck accepting it.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

It will be impossible to leave my gracious Princess alone. Therefore I beg leave, particularly as I have not been included in the invitation, to remain with your highness.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

My dear Knesebeck, I wish you to go, and request you will accept the invitation. You know how well I am amused every evening with my

children, and that they afford more gratification than the grandest festivities could do.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

Though I did not mention the young lady in my invitation, it is necessarily understood that she always accompanies the Princess.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

Did I not say no invitation had been given me after her highness refused the one made to her?

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

The Countess Platen is very right. Because I was invited, you were so as a matter of course, but as I am unable to accept the invitation, and wish you to go in my place, you will, I am sure, afford me that gratification.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

I join my solicitations with these commands, and hope to be excused if, in this affair, I have fallen into an error.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

I dare not resist such a command, and will therefore do myself the honour of complying with your request.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

But when is the festivity to be celebrated?

COUNTESS PLATEN.

It having been delayed in the hope of obtaining the honour of your highness's presence, and such delay being no longer necessary now you have declined, we shall return to our first arrangement, and it will take place this evening. Therefore I have only time to recommend myself, and depart.

[*Exit Countess Platen.*

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

This is a visit of such a kind, that I shall not like a second. The pride hid beneath her civil behaviour—the splendid robes—the magnificence of her house, with the revenge that has not been experienced by poor Ilse only,—have long excited my attention; and the extraordinary manner in which she laboured to hurt my feelings, certainly do not contribute to make me admire this woman; on the contrary, they are revolting to all my senses.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

Assuredly she is a remarkable woman, with whom persons should be cautious in all that may concern them. But, my gracious mistress, why should you recal her conduct, or even think of it, to the injury of your health? I am convinced the

whole was a scheme to prevent your going this evening. This appears to me the more probable, when we consider why you have never been invited till to-day; and why, if they desired your presence, they did not postpone the ceremony, though she mentioned something to that effect.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

You are right. The whole affair has been discussed beforehand, and it shall not further occupy my thoughts, should it produce no further consequences. But I am glad you are going. You may there observe everything, in order to inform me. This I prefer to my being present. But now come with me to my children; it is time to take our airing.

COUNT KONIGSMARK'S VISIT TO ZELLE.

ZELLE, 1688.

Buccow and Stechinelly.

BUCCOW.

WALK in. Here we may await the arrival of Königsmark, because he will be here very shortly, and most probably have a great deal of news to tell us from Hanover.

STECHINELLY.

There will be plenty of caballing and intriguing, and I should like to know how the Princess finds herself.

BUCCOW.

She is, I believe, recovered.

Enter COUNT KÖNIGSMARK.

BUCCOW.

I am very happy to see you again looking so well.

STECHINELLY.

I shall be glad to hear news once more from Hanover, for though it is but a short day's journey from this place, and though both courts are presided over by brothers, and entertain the most friendly relations, we seldom hear anything from that city which may be depended on, yet it is said many things occur there with which we should be greatly interested.

KÖNIGSMARK.

In Hanover we hear still less from Zelle. But Bernstorf, who, it is rumoured, corresponds with the Countess Platen, must of course be well informed of everything.

BUCCOW.

Oh, he is on such subjects as silent as the mouse that only repents her carelessness when she is caught by the cat. Now tell us something of the Countess, and how is her sister? It is reported that the latter is to be a bride.

KÖNIGSMARK.

After the marriage of the Crown Prince, she was treated by him with considerable distance; though this appeared, I believe, to render her uneasy, she never neglected an opportunity of attracting him, and, as it has been said, her endeavours did not entirely fail. When, however, her husband left this world, she grew dissatisfied with her widow's weeds, and diligently sought to flourish once more in the gay garments of a bride. Her elder sister rendered her all possible assistance, and caused, as it is reported, her betrothal to General Weyke to be celebrated on an estate in the neighbourhood of Hanover, in the presence of the Crown Prince. His Highness, it is said, finds great pleasure in the company of Mademoiselle Schulenburg, who has been introduced and recommended by the Countess Platen, with whose aid the young lady is raised high in his favour. Frequent riding parties, and other amusements, in a limited circle arranged by the Countess, are generally frequented by the Prince and Mademoiselle Schulenburg, who by her mild, soft, and engaging manners, has become the object of general attention.

STECHINELLY.

I met her several times at her parents', and must acknowledge the praise you have uttered does not exceed the truth.

BUCCOW.

To me she seemed very gentle and kind, yet very quiet; but " still waters are deep."

KÖNIGSMARK.

Such excellent instruction as the Countess Platen is able to give will, whilst both are seen together, speedily teach a young and agreeable woman, how to gain her object, although hitherto she may have been unacquainted with a gay court; especially if, after her arrival there, she is made to believe that she has captivated a Prince.

STECHINELLY.

It also appears that wealthy and learned persons are particularly favoured at the court of Hanover, and amongst others Leibnitz takes, very justly, the first rank, which is not only proved by the information that he has been enabled to collect regarding the history of the Guelphs, and at which he is still busily employed, but also by his other works, and his excellent comprehensive knowledge of all departments of learning. At

the early age of thirty years, he was considered a learned man, and was attracting the attention of various philosophers of different countries.

KÖNIGSMARK.

Therefore, very properly, is he patronized by the Duchess of Hanover, who finds, some say, infinitely more gratification in his learned conversation than in the splendour that surrounds a gay court. If the Duchess and Leibnitz are conversing, whilst the Bishop talks to the Countess, any one unacquainted with her personally, might be led by her magnificent dress to take the latter for the Duchess.

BUCCOW.

The Countess Platen has ever occupied a significant situation, and will certainly know how to make herself always necessary to her sovereign.

STECHINELLY.

I, however, marvel by what means she always maintains her favour with her patron, because her manner of living, her desire of revenge, and all her misconduct, cannot certainly have remained unknown to him; consequently he must know from what complaint she suffers.

KÖNIGSMARK.

Nevertheless, she is in high favour, and always

the queen of the company, at least she fancies herself such; but since the marriage of the Princess, whose style of dress vies in splendour with that of the Countess, and, if possible, surpasses her in magnificence, as she most certainly does in beauty, she has felt her superiority, and it has been made very apparent to her. Besides, she is beneath the Princess in rank. This naturally creates collisions, particularly as the latter shows no inclination to deny her pre-eminence. In this way have originated some amusing rubs, whilst the Countess betrays that the natural redness of her cheeks differs materially from the rouge she employs to improve her complexion. The first, however, soon vanishes again, because she knows how to control herself admirably, and is besides generally soon pacified by the kindness of her patron.

BUCCOW.

The proceedings at court undoubtedly produce many amusing incidents and changes, particularly as there are so many different interests, intentions, and objects, continually in action. But how likes the Princess all this variety?

KÖNIGSMARK.

It is said that she has been informed of the

progress of Mademoiselle Schulenburg in the favour of the Crown Prince, and has taken it quietly till now. The Prince, who finds much pleasure in a military life, or he would not have requested to command some troops against the Turks, seems to think his consort has too feeble and delicate a constitution to bear accompanying him in his rapid rides, and praises those who, under such circumstances, can endure fatigue. For this reason, and because Mademoiselle Schulenburg has comprehended the lessons of the Countess, he appears to pay particular attention to her conversation and to prefer her company.

STECHINELLY.

Here these transactions most probably are not perfectly known; therefore I should like to learn if the Duchess is acquainted with them.

BUCCOW.

She must have been informed by the Princess of many things, but I have no doubt she will be glad to hear from a third person her daughter's true situation.

STECHINELLY.

She is out walking, but it is possible she may have returned. I shall go and inform her of your arrival. [*Exit Stechinelly.*

BUCCOW.

I shall proceed to make the Duke aware of your arrival. He will be glad to see you. He was not in the palace, but he may have returned.

[*Exit Buccow.*

Enter the DUCHESS ELEONORE.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

I am glad to see you. Pray tell me how my daughter finds herself, and how her children are.

KÖNIGSMARK (*handing a letter*).

I have this to deliver personally.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Now tell me is my daughter entirely recovered, and are her children well?

KÖNIGSMARK.

The Princess is well, but has not entirely recovered her strength; her prince, and princess, your highness's grandchildren, are good, universally admired, and very healthy children, and remarkably fine, strong, and hearty, for their age.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Is Mademoiselle Schulenburg still in great favour there, and if so, does she intend remaining long in Hanover?

KÖNIGSMARK.

Nothing hitherto has been heard of her departure.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

She is much in the society of the Crown Prince?

KÖNIGSMARK.

Almost daily during his sojourn at Hanover.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Of this my daughter has also informed me. She is very glad to see you occasionally with Prince Charles, and I request you will sometimes visit her. She is always happy to see you. Does the Countess Platen conduct you frequently to my daughter's?

KÖNIGSMARK.

She has several times desired me to accompany her for that purpose, and has twice taken me thither. Once, on meeting her, she asked me to go with her, but as I declined on account of other occupations, she invited me to escort her a little way, and beginning to tell me something, respecting which she asked my opinion, she begged me to walk a little further with her, if I had not more urgent business. In

fulfilling her request, she walked in the direction of the palace. When we had arrived there, she again solicited me to wait a short time in an anteroom. She went to the Princess, and, in a few minutes, I received by a domestic her highness's commands to enter and pay my respects. But, though once caught, I have since, on other occasions, been more cautious.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

How so? Do you not like to visit my daughter?

KÖNIGSMARK.

It is not to that I alluded; on the contrary, I always felt highly honoured in having the pleasure of conversing with the Princess. But to be introduced by the Countess Platen, to be watched by her there, I certainly do not like, though there are no secrets to be transacted. She met me shortly after this occurrence, and began a conversation, demanding my opinion, during which we arrived near the palace, whereupon she requested me to walk up and down for a minute or two, but replying that business compelled me to decline waiting, she accompanied me about some hundred paces from the palace, when she

suddenly recollected that it was too late to proceed with me any farther, as she pretended, because she had promised to return to the palace. In consequence of her request, I went with her there, and then abruptly bade her adieu. She entered the palace, and, as I have been informed, went directly to the apartments of her sovereign.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Really you appear to have some reason for being cautious, particularly in talking, because the attention of this lady seems to have been fixed on you.

KÖNIGSMARK.

For this reason I took care not to be again introduced by her to the Princess.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

But I do not see exactly why you should refuse this to the Countess.

KÖNIGSMARK.

I refused it because I was assured she had some extraordinary design in view.

Enter DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

I am glad to see you here. What good news

have you brought from my brother, his consort, and their children, and more particularly from my daughter and her two children?

KÖNIGSMARK.

They were all well when I left them. The Princess has already more than once been present at the evening assemblies.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Have you got a letter? What does Sophy write?

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

She has not yet recovered her strength, though otherwise convalescent, but appears displeased with many things.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Women always make themselves sorrows where other people find none. How happy ought she to be, blessed with such fine and healthy children.

KÖNIGSMARK.

She unquestionably acknowledges the blessings of Providence in this respect. Her Prince and Princess are her greatest gratification. The first grows visibly, and is universally admired for his cleverness, and the pretty and engaging Princess

improves daily, and seems to be particularly preferred by her mother.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

This is very gratifying news to me. Eleonore, I have also received some letters. Would you not like to read them?

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

With pleasure. (*To Königsmark.*) I shall see you again soon.

[*Exeunt Duke and Duchess.*

Enter BERNSTORF *from the other side.*

BERNSTORF.

You have done well in having been persuaded to visit us. On being informed of your arrival I immediately came to see you.

KÖNIGSMARK.

You are very kind. I was prevented paying my respects to you sooner by having been detained here.

BERNSTORF.

How are my friends, Count and Countess Platen?

KÖNIGSMARK.

Both are in excellent health, as well as the whole ducal family.

BERNSTORF.

The beautiful Countess will, I suppose, be in as high favour as ever. Pray have you lately seen Mademoiselle Schulenburg?

KÖNIGSMARK.

Both ladies seem more likely to gain greater favour every day than to lose any part of it. The first is always happy if she be told that in so important a position as she occupies, she enjoys many privileges of great importance.

BERNSTORF.

Will the Crown Prince shortly resume his travels?

KÖNIGSMARK.

Nothing has hitherto transpired on this point.

Enter BUCCOW.

BERNSTORF.

What news has been received at Hanover from Paris?

KÖNIGSMARK.

I am unacquainted with any, save what has been published in the newspapers.

BERNSTORF.

But from Vienna, as I have been informed, good news has arrived.

KÖNIGSMARK.

Nothing has been publicly known.

BERNSTORF.

Then we must wait with patience.

[*Exit Bernstorf.*

BUCCOW.

This gentleman likes to be informed how the political horizon appears; it may possibly highly interest him. Will you now come with me to the Duchess, who wishes to see you as soon as she leaves the Duke?

KÖNIGSMARK.

With pleasure: would I were but the bearer of agreeable intelligence!

BUCCOW.

But, before we go, pray tell me how the mutual indifference of the Princess and her husband is considered at Hanover?

KÖNIGSMARK.

In a court like that of Hanover, where so much superfluous caballing and intriguing may be witnessed, and where also a woman like the Countess

Platen, possesses so many admirers and eavesdroppers, and enjoys such high favour, every one should be extremely careful in what he says, because she knows everything, partly by being told, and partly by her cleverness in conjecturing. It appears to be her intention to represent to the Duke there that the Princess is more indifferent to her husband than to other persons. A short time since, I stood unperceived behind a hedge in the Herrnhausen garden, when the Countess and her sovereign passed by me, intently conversing on the Princess.. It was represented by the Countess to be the fault of the Princess that she was not more frequently visited by her husband. The Bishop stopped surprised at what he had been told, and replied he was well aware that his son preferred an untrammelled military life, and had consequently not shown the regard for his consort that was expected. But the Countess again represented several trifling things that few others could have perceived, in a jesting manner, which, however, whilst they corroborated her opinion, were uttered only to the Princess's disadvantage. The Duke began to laugh, and said she had certainly observed more with her fine eyes than had come

under the notice of any one else. On this they continued their walk.

BUCCOW.

The Countess Platen is undoubtedly exceedingly hostile to the Princess. This feeling is said to have had its origin in the circumstance that, previously to the Princess's marriage, the Countess took the lead in most things, and attracted every one's admiration; but when, in the person of the Princess, there came on the scene an equally beautiful but far more amiable woman, one, too, of illustrious birth, who surpassed her in magnificence, these two suns could not by any possibility long vie with each other, particularly when one exceeded the other in brightness. The Countess Platen, consequently, as a clever adept in intrigue, not only sought by every means in her power to maintain her position, but knew how to act on the Crown Prince by means of her sister. When her sister became a widow, and lived a little more retired, the Countess thought to replace her by another, whom she might employ as her confidante, and by her untiring exertions this lady, Mademoiselle Schulenburg, obtained the honour of enjoying the favour of the Crown

Prince, as I have here been told. Pray is this true?

KÖNIGSMARK.

Something of the kind I have guessed, but taking this in combination with other particulars, many things become more distinct to me than heretofore; the sister of the Countess has been assisted in obtaining another husband, because she will be able to act with more effect upon the Prince as a bride. In such a situation, how greatly is the Princess to be pitied! But what can be done? And how can her Highness learn these things?

BUCCOW.

This would best be effected by some lady with her, but it must be done very cautiously, in order that the Countess does not gain intelligence of it, because she can do many things here, through Bernstorf, who, particularly since the marriage of the Princess, possesses her father's entire confidence, and might, if acquainted with what I mentioned, apply it to the advantage of the Countess. But you will hear more from the Duchess, who probably wishes to see you on this very account.

KÖNIGSMARK.

I regret that I cannot contribute anything towards it, although I am very willing to do all in my power, in order to humble that ambitious, imperious, and revengeful coquet. Every individual in the court stands in fear of her, but none like to show themselves opposed to her schemes.

BUCCOW.

You are a wealthy nobleman and can live in any country. If you honour the Princess, it is your duty to assist her, in order to put an end to the tricks of her enemies.

KÖNIGSMARK.

You appear to be very much against the Countess Platen.

BUCCOW.

I am convinced that I have a perfect right to be so. My father told me lately that he intended to leave me an estate. Bernstorf, who heard of it, told Platen, and his lady acquainted her sovereign with it immediately. But, shortly afterwards, Bernstorf obtained what I had been promised, for the purpose of improving his Gartow property. My father will, I am sure, make me a recompence; but con-

sider, when such conduct has been exhibited by a woman, how am I to estimate her?

KÖNIGSMARK.

This is something entirely new to me. I shall consider what you have mentioned, and see what may be done. Now let us go to the Duchess.

BUCCOW.

I am glad you appear to be of my opinion. Let us go.

THE WEDDING PARTY.

HANOVER, 1688.

Enter Princess Sophia Dorothea, and looks at a clock in the room.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

ALREADY eleven o'clock, and Mademoiselle Knesebeck not yet returned! What can have happened there? The company were to separate at ten o'clock, and she might be here an hour later. Oh! had I but remained with my parents, how happy I might have passed the time! For wealth, magnificence, and display, and even the highest dignity, do not constitute happiness in this life. In our simple style of living at Zelle, where, however, some amusements to vary our daily occupations were to be enjoyed, luxuries—here so

much sought after, and on which such vast sums are frequently spent—were unknown to me. There I found myself happy. But here exist a thousand cares respecting my dear children, and also regarding the Crown Prince, whose obliging, and frequently kind and engaging conduct to others, compared to the inattention which I experience, is enough to make me discontented. The amiable Mademoiselle Knesebeck does, however, all in her power to revive my spirits. She renounces all pleasures to keep me company; she is my comfort and my faithful companion in solitude, at this splendid, gay, and restless court. She, my excellent mother-in-law, and my children, are here my only solace.

[*Sheds tears.*

Enter MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

At last, my honoured and amiable Princess. But what do I perceive! You are in grief, and in tears. No! Come, satisfy your mind, and rejoice you were not there. But, as you are still very weak, why have you not gone to rest?

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

No; I could not know any peace until I had seen you, and learned what has happened.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

All the friends of the Platens, with many of the Countess's gallants, were there collected together. Everything was in the rustic style, but very splendidly arranged, and every enjoyment that momentarily can intoxicate the senses carefully provided. But I was there a superfluous spectator; although I cannot but praise the civilities of the Countess and her sister, and of those who were despatched by them to attend to me. Separated from you, however, my Princess, continually thinking of you, nothing could revive me, although so much was attempted. I am inclined to believe, had your Highness been there, you would not have been better amused, because you feel no inclination for extravagant pleasures that intoxicate the mind. Nevertheless, the Crown Prince and all his illustrious brothers were very much amused; and, though the marriage took place to-day, before this morning it was not determined whether it should be to-day or some days later.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Was Mademoiselle Schulenburg there?

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

Yes, the Countess brought her; and when the Crown Prince arrived, she took her sister and the young lady to receive him.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

I dare say, then, he was pleased with his reception.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

Favoured by the most beautiful weather, and the gardens being brilliantly illuminated, there were several bands of musicians—a pantomime —a farce—artificial fireworks—and various other entertainments of a similar nature, which were exhibited as though to make one pleasure drive away its predecessor; and a spectator desirous of both seeing and hearing everything found it necessary to guard against taking off his attention. But all would not do to make me fancy myself pleasantly situated.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Did the Prince converse much with Mademoiselle Schulenburg?

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

I remarked that they spoke several times on the various amusements and gratifications to be there enjoyed. But these had been admired by every one present. Now I am sure I dare not any longer prevent you from taking your night's rest.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

You will not disturb me by your conversation, but rather quiet my mind. In what manner did you return?

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

With the Crown Prince.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Were you two the only occupants of that carriage, or was any one else there?

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

On starting, the Countess, who had brought Mademoiselle Schulenburg, declared she had all the seats in her carriage occupied, and therefore requested the Crown Prince—as, besides himself, there were but myself and an adjutant in the carriage—to take Mademoiselle Schulenburg.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

How were you seated in the carriage?

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

Mademoiselle Schulenburg entered first, and insisted on a front seat, but the Prince entered and induced her, after many refusals, to accept the seat beside him at the back of the carriage I sat opposite to Mademoiselle Schulenburg.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Pray now inform me what were the subjects of conversation during your return.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

The conversation touched on several things that had just been shown for the amusement of the company; principally, however, on the choice and exquisite entertainment produced by the representation of a company of comedians just arrived from France. They attracted almost general attention.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Did the Prince inquire after me? Unfortunately, I have not spoken to him all day; for, when I was shut up in my dressing-room, it was said he was in the anteroom, and, being informed where I was, he immediately went away.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

His highness inquired very particularly after

your health, as did also the Countess and Mademoiselle Schulenburg, who appeared to lament the loss of your society as the only thing wanting to complete the happiness of the Crown Prince.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

I could not have been amused there. I preferred stopping at home. My kind mother-in-law has given me her company.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

What pleased me most was hearing from Mademoiselle Schulenburg, during our return, the highest praise of you, to which the Prince completely agreed.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Generally he appears very laconic when I am mentioned. But pray tell me the truth. When Mademoiselle Schulenburg mentioned me, did he not give very brief answers?

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

This I cannot deny; but he pronounced them in your praise very heartily.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

How did Mademoiselle Schulenburg get home?

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

The carriage first stopped at her residence, and

the adjutant assisted her in alighting. Afterwards, the Prince and myself were set down at the palace.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Then the Crown Prince must have been better amused than if I had been present.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

This I cannot say, although he appeared highly gratified. But now, my most gracious Princess, let me urgently entreat you, as you have learned all that has occurred, to seek the rest you so much require, in order, to-morrow morning, if the weather permits, to enjoy the benefit of an airing.

A DESERTED WIFE.

HANOVER, 1690.

Königsmark and Buccow.

KÖNIGSMARK.

I AM extremely glad that you have also come to attend the celebration of these festivities, for I wish to converse with you on several subjects. It was almost apprehended here that the illustrious personages from Zelle would have remained away, in consequence of certain letters said to have been exchanged regarding the sovereign of Hanover and his illustrious sister-in-law, and their differences.

BUCCOW.

They can exist only in the imaginations of those who like to exaggerate everything, or who are disposed to draw the most erroneous conclu-

sions from speculation, in order to signify something of vast consequence.

KÖNIGSMARK.

Pray then inform me, is there any truth in the rumour that the Duchess and Bernstorf are frequently at variance, and that this produces serious evils ?

BUCCOW.

I am aware of such having been reported, and do not believe it to be true. But as respects the generally admired benevolence of the Duchess, particularly towards her countrymen, it is possible that she may have recommended them opportunely, and perhaps have shown herself favourably disposed towards them, whilst Bernstorf, who in his administration seems ever intent on economising for his sovereign, may have been anything rather than well pleased, and particularly when, at the instigation of the Duchess, considerable sums have been given for the support of these foreigners. He is also averse to his sovereign occasionally asking the opinion of his consort in his affairs, especially if she obtains information on any point, and gives an opinion in opposition to the minister's. However, all these are temporary difficulties, and must quickly vanish.

KÖNIGSMARK.

Consequently, both have only one interest, but not the same ideas. But how it must hurt the pride of Bernstorf, if his opinion be not considered preferable!

BUCCOW.

Assuredly he does not give in, but continues to support his own views. The Duchess in particular invariably considers the welfare of the people in the first instance, yet she cannot always see as profoundly into state affairs as Bernstorf. This advantage he applies to recommend his opinion, and if he can avail himself of such means, his advice is sure to be preferred. The Duchess, sometimes finding this not in accordance with the respect due to her, retaliates, when an opportunity offers, by showing that she can make the minister sensible of his inferior situation. Consequently, their conduct towards each other most probably is in opposition to the Duke's wishes. But the minister has an overpowering influence over the mind of his sovereign, particularly since the marriage of the Princess, and still more so since the Lauenburg territory was taken possession of last year, after the demise of the last prince of the sove-

reign family of that country; and, since this dukedom will, by Bernstorf's assistance, most probably be entirely ceded to our Duke, on the payment of a large sum to the Court of Saxony, it is at least anticipated that, by his assistance and that of the Imperial Court, this affair will be brought to a favourable issue. By this the Lüneburg territory would gain considerably.

KÖNIGSMARK.

If such be the case, all this can only tend to a happy result.

BUCCOW.

This is the more certain, because the benevolent and excellent Duke is himself the most strenuous advocate for the people, and a liberal supporter of the French Protestant refugees.

KÖNIGSMARK.

The Countess Platen, it is said, possesses great influence at the court of Zelle, and Bernstorf, it is reported, still particularly favours all her proceedings.

BUCCOW.

It must be well known to you that Bernstorf is greatly esteemed by his sovereign, who only desires the welfare of the country, and is ever ready

to fulfil the wishes of the Hanoverian Court as regards a future union of the possessions of both brothers. But the Duke of Wolfenbüttel, hopes to set aside such an intended junction, or at least expects, from belonging to the elder line of the house of Brunswick Lüneburg, to obtain some portion of the Lüneburg territory, and in this respect favours all the wishes of the Duchess—whom, since her marriage, he has ever esteemed as his kinswoman—consequently he is opposed to Bernstorf's views. In this way probably very opposite opinions have occasionally been produced, regarding which, however, nothing has become publicly known. But tell me truly, how is the Princess?

KÖNIGSMARK.

She passes her time, when left alone, in deep thought, and, as it seems, not with that contentment of mind which is desirable.

BUCCOW.

It may be that the Countess Platen has contributed to this in some way?

KÖNIGSMARK.

She has, without doubt. Since her sister lost that high degree of favour with the Crown Prince

which she enjoyed before his marriage, the Countess, in order to retain her influence over his mind, introduced Mademoiselle Schulenburg, whom he so much esteems and favours, that, in consequence of the attention shown by him to her, many stories have been told about them. She is, however, very attractive, particularly through the gentleness and mildness of her manners. But some assert that she hides an intriguing disposition under this softness of manner, and so gains her object.

BUCCOW.

She certainly has a fine person, and possesses an imposing appearance. But how does she agree with the Countess Platen's sister, now Madame Weyke?

KÖNIGSMARK.

Report says, very well: though the latter cannot but be aware she is growing older, she prefers the company of young ladies. To be a widow did not please her at all; therefore she married so quickly after the death of her first husband, with whom, moreover, some have asserted that she did not live very happily, and that he sometimes reproached her for the associates she kept, and for her extravagant style of living.

BUCCOW.

This may be true. But pray how is the Princess satisfied with her?

KÖNIGSMARK.

She takes no more notice of the General's wife than civility renders necessary; and the same may be said of the Countess, whose haughtiness, however, frequently excites her sharp but well-deserved animadversions.

BUCCOW.

I do not comprehend why the Duchess Sophia does not treat the gay Countess differently.

KÖNIGSMARK.

Our universally esteemed Duchess considers herself too exalted to be disquieted by the conduct of the Countess, who has long since attracted general attention. She always treats the minister's wife with amazing civility,—does not avoid her,—but assuredly does not particularly wish for her company. If some one should chance to make remarks to her on the Countess, she invariably endeavours to turn them to her advantage. She is truly a perfect pattern for a Princess. The learned conversations of Leibnitz particularly attract her. She sometimes listens for hours in

his company, if he answers her questions, and thanks him when he has informed her what she wished to be made acquainted with. But sometimes it happens that their opinions differ: and should any subject on which they have been conversing not be concluded, or completely explained, their conversation is resumed on their next meeting, until they agree, or the requisite explanation be given.

BUCCOW.

But does not the Princess observe the conduct of her revered mother-in-law, in order to follow her example?

KÖNIGSMARK.

As far as can be judged she does not. But it is said she has sometimes made remarks to the Duchess respecting the Countess Platen. They have, however, always been answered in a manner as if it was the Duchess Sophia's opinion that the Countess acted solely for the benefit of her sovereign and his family. Such conduct appears incomprehensible to the Princess; at the same time she cannot be free from disquietude respecting her husband. This valiant and illustrious Prince finds increasing pleasure in a military life; and this, it is

said, he has shown at court, and it is also rumoured, he has declared it to his consort.

BUCCOW.

Do you not think she makes extraordinary demands on her husband? She may have had, in her youth, as has been advanced, a little too much of her own way, and now sometimes puts forth unexpected demands. But latterly her admirable conduct, her well-known charity, her kindness of heart,—particularly at the sight of suffering,—and her estimable conduct, have not been denied even by her enemies, though she may sometimes appear a little hasty.

KÖNIGSMARK.

It remains, therefore, incomprehensible to me, how any variance of opinion between her and her husband could ever have originated, though now, apparently, it has produced some coolness in their behaviour towards each other. Whilst in society this gifted Princess is so generally admired, she is, it is said, frequently seen apparently very unhappy and in deep thought, though she seeks to conceal this from the public. Observe her constantly, and you will see something in her external appearance deeply sorrowful.

BUCCOW.

It is impossible for me to conceive how she can have given way to such uncomfortable impressions,—she apparently having all qualities and requisites that could contribute to earthly happiness,—and this is the more singular, as she was ever of a cheerful disposition.

KÖNIGSMARK.

She appears first to have had her attention aroused by the conduct of her husband towards Madame Weyke soon after her marriage, and by the frequent conversations between them; but now she thinks Mademoiselle Schulenburg more particularly deserving her notice. This may have contributed to her unfortunate change of mind.

BUCCOW.

You do not mean to say that jealousy has caused this unhappy state of the Princess?

KÖNIGSMARK.

That is not exactly my meaning; but she finds herself forsaken and neglected, whilst observing the particular attentions that are, or that she may believe are, shown by her husband towards others.

Enter STECHINELLY.

STECHINELLY.

Gentlemen, you are talking here so earnestly that you appear to have forgot it is high time to go to the masquerade.

BUCCOW.

I am glad you have come to remind us to prepare ourselves for it.

KÖNIGSMARK.

I am almost afraid I have stopped too long.

STECHINELLY.

Then make haste. I hope to be there before you,—nevertheless I should like to know the subject of your conversation.

A COURT MASQUERADE.

HANOVER 1691.

Duke George William with Duchess Sophia, Ernest Augustus and Princess Sophia Dorothea, Prince George Lewis and Duchess Eleonore, Count Platen and Mademoiselle Schulenburg, Bernstorf and Mademoiselle Knesebeck, and Count Königsmark, masqued, and in fancy dresses.

ERNEST AUGUSTUS (*to Countess Platen*).

I AM glad to see my brother here, with so numerous a suite, but am still more rejoiced that he has informed me of his sanguine expectations respecting Lauenburg. Has Bernstorf communicated anything concerning the court of Wolfenbüttel? I shall be glad to learn all the designs in that quarter that they may be evaded, or, if

requisite, to support Bernstorf in order to accomplish my brother's wishes, so that nothing may be lost.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

Bernstorf must certainly have heard a great deal of the transactions with the cousin of his sovereign at Wolfenbüttel, and I am sure he will act for his sovereign, in all respects for the advantage of your highness. Therefore it may assuredly be anticipated, that requests for portions of Lauenburg, or compensation, will be refused at Zelle, although the Duke of Wolfenbüttel, now that five years have elapsed since he attained the regency of his brother's country, will not neglect anything to realise his wishes to be something more than an unprofitable spectator of the acquisition of Lauenburg.

COUNTESS PLATEN (*to Princess Sophia Dorothea*).

It is surprising what exertions Königsmark makes to display his admirable alertness and dexterity. His cleverness in amusing a company is really wonderful, and in this respect he excels every one.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

He would be greatly flattered were such praises

told him. He exerts himself, doubtless, to show how much he rejoices at your husband's elevation to the rank of Count.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

This kindness of his sovereign has really been entirely unexpected by my husband, and particularly the gracious manner in which it was conferred as a mark of gratitude for his long and arduous services.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Count Königsmark, your manifold endeavours to display your joy on the happy elevation of rank of the Countess Platen have met with due acknowledgments. It now only remains for you to show your gratitude.

[*Exit Princess Sophia Dorothea.*

KÖNIGSMARK.

Assuredly I shall do all in my power to please the fascinating Countess.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

You really possess the art of charming in a remarkable degree.

KÖNIGSMARK.

Were I gifted with such an art, you may depend I should not allow it to remain unemployed in such society.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

We are here almost separated from the company; anticipating, however, the favour of a visit from you after to-morrow's assembly, I shall be delighted to meet you then to take a walk with you in the gardens. But I think we should join our friends, who have already considerably diminished in number.

KÖNIGSMARK.

I shall not fail to-morrow to obey your kind commands.

THE EMBROIDERED GLOVE.

HANOVER 1691.

Countess Platen and Königsmark.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

IT is impossible for me to explain to you how exceedingly well you amused the whole Court, but principally the illustrious family, by your exertions at the masquerade last night; and this, not only by your dexterity in dancing, but by your admirable jests.

KÖNIGSMARK.

You are very kind to praise so highly my humble endeavours.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

I assure you I only speak the truth. Your talent to amuse not a few merely, but a whole

company has very justly excited general admiration. Besides, the assumption of different characters, and the rapid change from one to another, elicited much praise. Indeed everything looked as though you were possessed of uncommon, I might almost say supernatural, arts, to please, to surprise, and gain the favour of every one.

KÖNIGSMARK.

Really, Countess, you are so exceedingly kind, to express so much praise of my poor efforts, that I am quite ashamed of not being able adequately to express my gratitude. If I have acted to your satisfaction, it would be a sufficient reward for having accomplished my ardent wishes, to show, by my exertions, my sincere congratulations on the agreeable circumstance of your husband being raised to the dignity of a Count.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

Much as you strive to convince me that you doubt the sincerity of my congratulations, I again assure you that you could not have appeared to more advantage than you did last night. But, as I find it rather damp here, I request you will enter into this pavilion with me for a moment, that I may arrange something in my head-dress, which seems to

have suffered by the wind and the moisture of the atmosphere.

KÖNIGSMARK, (*entering the pavilion with her*).

Pray, if you think me sufficiently clever, give me leave to render my assistance.

COUNTESS PLATEN, (*arranging the ornaments of her head-dress*).

I am greatly obliged to you; but that is not necessary, though I am sure you possess more than the requisite abilities. But do you not observe two gentlemen approaching? Are they not the Crown Prince and Platen? Come, my dear Count, let us be off by this side walk, hidden by hedges, to join the company.

[*Exit with Königsmark, dropping a glove unperceived by him.*

Enter, from the other side, PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS *and the* COUNT PLATEN.

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

This is singular! Though we observed the gentleman and lady at a distance, and walked only a little way behind a hedge unperceived, they have suddenly disappeared. (*Both look*

in every direction.) I cannot see anything of them. Did you not perceive them?

COUNT PLATEN.

I observed only a lady and a gentleman slip out of the pavilion and rapidly disappear. Be so kind as to come here, your highness; you will soon see them reappear from behind yonder hedge; the gentleman appears to be Count Königsmark. There they are. Does your highness not perceive them?

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

Yes. Assuredly it is Königsmark, whom I know by his figure and dress: but who is the lady who accompanies him?

COUNT PLATEN.

I am sure I do not know. (*Discovers the glove and takes it up.*) Ha! a lady's glove! (*Looking at it attentively.*) What elegant embroidery!

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS, (*observing the glove*).

This is very strange! I believe I lately brought my consort from the Netherlands gloves similar to this; or possibly this one. Well, we will inquire to whom it belongs, and restore it, which is the least we can do, after having so unexpectedly disturbed this couple.

COUNT PLATEN, (*looks on the floor, and pretends to have found a few pins, which he does not remove*).

Ay, this is indeed singular. Though we may not discover the owner of the pins, we may be more successful in our efforts to find who has lost the glove.

[*As they depart, enter Servants as if searching for something.*

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

What are you about?

FIRST SERVANT.

We are looking for a glove lost by her highness the Princess, who, after showing it to several persons in the garden, has had it exchanged for another very like it.

COUNT PLATEN.

Perhaps I have found it.

[*Exeunt Servants searching.*

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

This is very singular. Show me the glove once more. (*Looks at it.*) Assuredly this is one of the pair I brought for my consort. But restore it to her.

Enter PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA, PRINCE MAXIMILIAN, DUCHESS SOPHIA, DUKE ERNEST AUGUSTUS, COUNTESS PLATEN, AND KÖNIGSMARK.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

It is incomprehensible to me who could have changed my glove for this one, which certainly is very like it. You, Prince Maximilian, had it from me.

PRINCE MAXIMILIAN.

It is certainly extraordinary. When you gave me leave to show your glove to a lady, I handed it to Mrs. Weyke.

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

This is very singular. If it has been changed, it might easily be discovered who wears such gloves.

KÖNIGSMARK.

I believe the Countess Platen wears gloves very similar.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Well; but I should like to know who obtained my glove to have it exchanged.

PRINCE MAXIMILIAN.

Madame Weyke ought to know to whom she gave it.

COUNT PLATEN, (*producing the glove.*)

I have been informed that your highness has lost a glove. Is it this one?

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

It is. This is extraordinary. But pray how did you get this glove, and where did you find it?

COUNT PLATEN.

I am delighted to have restored the glove to its owner.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

There is the false glove which has been substituted for mine.

PRINCE MAXIMILIAN.

I shall keep it, out of curiosity.

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

The glove that Platen brought was found by him in my presence.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

It really is very fortunate that Platen found the glove in the presence of the Crown Prince, because, had it been otherwise, erroneous suspicions might be entertained. I am glad I wear gloves of a kind that vary greatly from those of the Princess, which are so beautifully embroidered. But it certainly ought to be ascertained to whom

the false glove belongs. Where was the genuine one discovered?

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

In the south-east pavilion.

DUKE ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

But how did it get there?

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

Before I went there with Platen, we perceived a lady and a gentleman; but when they observed us approaching, they suddenly disappeared. Königsmark, have you been to the pavilion?

KÖNIGSMARK.

I have been there several times this afternoon, like many others.

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

What lady was in your company when you were last there?

KÖNIGSMARK.

The Countess Platen had invited me to walk with her, and we merely passed through the pavilion.

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

Did you perceive the glove under the stone bench.

KÖNIGSMARK.

I did not.

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

Fine excuses! (*Turning away.*)

COUNTESS PLATEN, (*taking Königsmark aside*).

What have you told the Prince?

KÖNIGSMARK.

That I have been several times in the pavilion, through which I walked in your company, like several others who had been there; but also that I had not seen the glove.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

I am delighted you have been so prudent. I should like to see you on this matter presently; besides which it will afford me the highest gratification once more to witness the ingenuity so universally admired last night; may I, therefore, hope to have the pleasure of seeing you for a moment when we have left the company?

KÖNIGSMARK.

I am afraid I shall not be able to gratify your wishes, although you have mentioned my exertions last night in so kind a manner; consequently, I must request you will excuse me, should I be prevented from having the honour of waiting upon you in obedience to your commands.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

You have certainly a decided inclination for fresh praise; but from this I must refrain, as I shall withhold it till you have been with me, to see if you can exhibit as much skill and talent to please me alone as you put forth last night before a numerous company.

KÖNIGSMARK.

I certainly will try all in my power, in order, if possible, again to obtain your approbation, and to rise in your favour.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

Then you will not refuse my request. Besides, I never knew that you were fond of paying compliments. Before this I admired in you the ardent soldier; but yesterday, by your cleverness and dexterity, you afforded amusement to a multitude, which cannot be sufficiently commended, and it is my chief wish to have another opportunity of admiring your abilities.

KÖNIGSMARK.

It is impossible for me to refuse so kind an invitation. I shall avail myself of the honour of obeying the commands I have received.

THE DETECTED CONSPIRACY.

WOLFENBUTTEL, 1692.

Stechinelly and Buccow.

BUCCOW.

COME in, my dear friend. Here you may inform me of all that has happened in Hanover during my absence. But first tell me how is the Princess.

STECHINELLY.

Apparently she does not find her position comfortable, because of the overbearing conduct of the all-powerful Countess Platen, which has often excited the astonishment of the Princess, and occasioned remarks which only made the Countess more bitter against her. Nevertheless, the lady

shows herself exceedingly obliging and courteous to the Princess. But, with this display of friendship and humility, she frequently makes the Princess feel some stinging remark; for instance, she pretends to lament that an illustrious lady, universally admired for her mental and personal endowments, cannot secure the affections of her husband, because he more particularly favours another lady, with whose company he is so much pleased, as to testify by his preference of it how much he admires her more than he does his consort.

BUCCOW.

In this way she endeavours to excite the Princess's jealousy, and should this already exist, her conduct is well adapted to increase it. It is said that this has long been the design of the Countess, and it may happen that, with a Princess so ignorant of intrigue, she may succeed.

STECHINELLY.

It is reported that the Countess has already, I am sorry to say, made considerable progress towards her object. But it is not in this way only that she intends acting against the Princess. The

Countess seems to cabal in a similar manner with the Prince in order to render him jealous, and, if possible, to make him neglect his consort. For this purpose, the tender Mademoiselle Schulenburg and the obliging Madame Weyke, have willingly tendered their assistance. The Crown Prince, however, is too sincere to give credit to any invention of this kind, that may be brought before him either in a disguised or in a jesting manner, by these ladies. He laughs and jokes about it, and his behaviour to Königsmark shows how boundless is the confidence he places in his wife.

BUCCOW.

Is Konigsmark really the person selected by the Countess for insuring her object? Though strange things have been told me about him and her, I should not give them any credit, had I not been informed of them before I quitted Zelle.

STECHINELLY.

It is indeed all true. However, as respects the Princess, it is but too apparent that she does not pass her days happily, or amuse herself to her satisfaction. The tricks of both the sisters and

of Mademoiselle Schulenburg, though they have only excited the Princess's jealousy as yet, may assuredly become more dangerous to her.

BUCCOW.

I am very sorry to hear it. This excellent Princess certainly can little expect such intrigues, and cannot know how to meet them. But pray what has transpired of Molcke's affairs, for on my departure there were many singular reports respecting him?

STECHINELLY.

You must know that one evening, at an assembly, he presented some snuff to his sovereign, who took as much as three fingers would hold, upon which Molcke was asked to take the Duke's cards. The snuff was presently given with some meat to a little dog, who died after taking it. On the Bishop's receiving back his cards, and learning the fate of the dog, he gave orders for the arrest of Molcke. He was immediately informed that some one wished to see him, but at the bottom of the stairs he had to surrender his sword, and became a prisoner.

BUCCOW.

This was reported before my departure. But are the real designs of Molcke known?

STECHINELLY.

Nothing has been made public, but it is well known that he was beheaded on the 15th of July, on a charge of high treason.

BUCCOW.

But have no particulars transpired of this affair?

STECHINELLY.

It is only known that Molcke was examined, and that he defended himself without success. It has, however, been stated that he was questioned whether the Princess was not a party in his designs; but this he denied, even after it had been declared to him that, could he prove her participation, his case would be much more favourably considered. It is reported that this proceeding arose from information given by the Countess Platen.

BUCCOW.

It is, therefore, evident that Molcke has suffered punishment for having offered a poisoned pinch of snuff to his sovereign.

STECHINELLY.

Most probably, though not exclusively on that account, because this cannot have been ascertained

by means of the dead dog. But it is said he had tried, at the instigation of Prince Maximilian, to induce Bernstorf to assist in keeping inviolate the last will of the Prince's grandfather, Duke George, respecting the two branches of the Brunswick-Lüneburg family. Molcke, however, is said to have asserted that this was first mentioned to him by Bernstorf, because he intended to insure him, even after the demise of his sovereign, the situation of prime minister, which, if Lüneburg and Hanover were united into one country during Platen's life, would be impossible. But Bernstorf had given the first information, and excited suspicion against Molcke, who, it has been stated, before his imprisonment, had been under close surveillance, and particularly his frequent interviews with Prince Maximilian, lasting sometimes an hour, had been noticed, which caused considerable suspicion a year previously to his offering the snuff.

When something more had transpired of Prince Maximilian's intentions, the suspicion against Molcke increased, and this perhaps occasioned the experiment with the snuff. His arrest, and the examination of his papers, afforded proof of a design to maintain two separate sovereign lines, in oppo-

sition to the settlements of 1680. These conjectures afterwards received confirmation. Affairs were in this state when the treaty of the 22nd of last March, with Austria, regarding their eternal amity, was concluded by the assistance of Count Platen and his wife. Then Prince Maximilian and Molcke thought fit, as it is reported, to act decidedly to attain their object before the Bishop had had the electoral dignity conferred upon him. In the mean time, Duke Antony Ulrick, it is said, also did all in his power to prevent this elevation of rank in the younger branch, and perhaps induced Prince Maximilian to change his religion in hopes of gaining allies amongst the Catholic sovereigns; this the latter has already done, and, in consequence, it may have been desirable to put an end to the designs of Molcke and the Prince.

BUCCOW.

This seems very just and proper; but pray who is to become Elector—our sovereign, as the elder brother of Bishop Ernest Augustus, or the latter?

STECHINELLY.

It is expected that the privy councillor von Grote, with the promise of the Bishop's elevation

in rank, will very soon return with the Emperor's consent; the privy councillor having been left at Vienna by Count Platen, merely to arrange some formalities.

BUCCOW.

Then Bernstorf will have an excellent opportunity to show how much he can do with his sovereign for his brother's advantage, by which means he will be able to forward his views of obtaining some new possessions, in exchange for others, to enlarge his Gartow property.

STECHINELLY.

But, besides, he is not at all displeased by Platen forwarding presents, insomuch that it is reported nothing can be done at Zelle which has not been previously sanctioned at Hanover; and some pretend that the designs of our sovereign never can be so readily accomplished as those of the Bishop.

BUCCOW.

I feel much obliged to you for the news you have told me. Of this I had previously heard but little, given in contradictory accounts, respecting which I could never gain more correct information, though it would have been both valuable

and interesting to me. Pray have you also been informed of Prince Maximilian's presence here?

STECHINELLY.

I should scarcely think he was here in Wolfenbüttel; but he has been seen in the neighbourhood. I have been ordered to look after him, and to let him know he is not to leave the Austrian dominions, for very important reasons; and moreover it is his uncle's particular wish.

BUCCOW.

Then I may possibly be of some use to you. I shall acquaint you with all the information I can obtain about him; but, in the mean while, if you can spare time, tell me what the Countess Platen is about.

STECHINELLY.

During her illness, she did not appear publicly, as you must know; and even after she had been cured, as it is reported, by Königsmark's assistance, she was not visible anywhere for several weeks, and even at home she has only been seen by a few; but Königsmark's visits, it is said, were never declined, but gladly accepted, although he usually came secretly. Yet when the Countess subsequently re-appeared in public, she was not

pleased with the visits that he paid the Princess; and on this point her jealousy rose to such a height as to excite her reproaches.

BUCCOW.

I am sorry, on this account, for the Princess; because such a woman as the Countess Platen may make herself very useful, and also become very dangerous, as her sovereign appears to be aware. I believe this to be the reason why he still favours her so much.

STECHINELLY.

This is really extraordinary, but it shows that this woman, now arrived at a mature age knows how to apply her talents wonderfully well, particularly in securing at present greater influence over the actions of her sovereign than she ever had, though the way in which she has been living, and the affair with Königsmark, cannot have remained unknown to the Bishop; added to which her sister is not in such high favour with the Crown Prince as she was some years since, and cannot assist her in her cabals as much as she once did. Even though, since Mademoiselle Schulenburg rose so greatly in the good opinion of the Crown Prince, it was anticipated

that some changes would ensue, she still seems to maintain her position, and exhibits her pride on every occasion.

BUCCOW.

She certainly is a most remarkable woman, who is prodigiously active in endeavouring to serve her sovereign, for which he seems continually anxious to show his gratitude. But how is Mademoiselle Schulenburg?

STECHINELLY.

She is as tender, as delicate, and as amiable as ever, or at least so appears; but such appearances may be adopted by her to conceal her designs. Pray can you tell me where I can now see Prince Maximilian?

BUCCOW.

If you will come with me, I hope to bring you nearer to the accomplishment of your mission.

A FAMILY CONSULTATION.

ZELLE, 1692.

Duke George William and Duchess Eleonore.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

COME in, my dear Eleonore. Here you may tell me all the news you have received from Wolfenbüttel. Do you not think it strange that there should exist an intention of bestowing on my brother the Electoral dignity, though I am the elder brother?

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

It certainly seems so; but your brother has male heirs, who are to be considered the heirs of his country and of yours. Prince Maximilian does not seem satisfied. His presence in the neighbourhood of Wolfenbüttel convinces me

that he, as well as the Duke of that country, wishes two sovereign lines in the Lüneburg and Hanoverian states, and that they entertain secret designs. Such, however, being opposed to the interests of our grandchildren, and as very possibly they might create disturbances in the country, it will in all probability be best, in order to avoid unforeseen accidents, to learn the intentions of Duke Antony Ulrick, and then, if necessary, to give him a small portion to make him satisfied.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Although I should be delighted to please my old friend, I must confess that my consenting to such a concession would be acting in opposition to the treaties concluded with my brother; and to agree to act, in part only, in consonance with my friend's wishes, would undoubtedly affect the rights of my brother, of our daughter, and of their children.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

You might be contented with something in lieu of it, if the Countess Platen had but less influence over his opinions and conduct.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

I do not think, as regards this, she could do anything to change my brother's opinion.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

But it is generally reported that she has great influence in directing his opinion; though many things—for example, the dissipation of the Countess, her adventures with Königsmark, and other circumstances—cannot assuredly have remained unknown to the Duke.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Whilst considering all this, I am convinced he is not much influenced by the wife of his first minister; and particularly when I remember his resolute character, because, after well considering, he never alters a plan once determined on. Moreover, who knows what stories have been told by the caballing of the courtiers; with reference to which I always think of his revered consort, who, whenever anything is said against the Countess, defends her more ably than any one else. Consequently, if the Countess offers my brother her opinion, I cannot imagine it has any particular influence over him.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Your sister-in-law certainly exhibits an example elevated above all criticism. She is honoured and esteemed by every one and possibly all that has

been stated by certain intriguers respecting the Countess Platen may not be true. Nevertheless, it remains certain that she knows how to raise and praise herself greatly; and has, besides,—to show her power, and gratify her vanity and ambition, —undoubtedly acted sometimes in a manner to bear out my suppositions. At the same time, perhaps it is doubtful whether your highness's brother would promote his welfare by putting such a woman aside, who, possessing a knowledge of state secrets, by caballing and meddling in politics, might become dangerous to him. Nevertheless, I am satisfied her opinion is sometimes of great consequence.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

She may have as much influence as she desires, or as the world reports, still I rely on the firmness of my brother's character in always accomplishing the intentions on which his mind is made up, after due consideration, although he will agree, when it is to his advantage, that such intentions be brought into operation according to circumstances.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

As your illustrious brother possesses so stable a

character, and as, according to her letters, he treats our daughter so kindly, it would be desirable that she had no cause of complaint against the Crown Prince.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Though such complaints may be true, it is very possible she may be the cause of them: and have herself created these unfortunate differences.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

This I cannot believe from the contents of her letters, because she does not so much complain of the little attention she receives, as of the disregard shown to her compared with the manner in which others are treated,—such as Madame Weyke, and more particularly Mademoiselle Schulenburg, against whom her complaints are pointedly directed. She has experienced neglect so marked as to have excited observation in other parties.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

But who told her of these things?

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Mademoiselle Knesebeck. Our daughter also several times perceived that, during assemblies, and at dinner parties, not a word has been ad-

dressed to her, though the conversation with Mademoiselle Schulenburg was most animatedly kept up, during which such glances were exchanged as expressed more than words, because the latter, if not the result of conviction, may pass away like an empty sound, but the earnest gaze undeniably betrays the secrets of the heart, and is exceedingly significant; particularly should there be anything in the intimacy of the parties which would render such correspondence by the eyes natural and opportune. Besides, we should consider how many words are idly squandered away at a court, while the expression of the physiognomy confines itself to facts. But leaving such remarks out of the question, we have only now to consider what can be done to promote our daughter's happiness, and to restore her peace of mind.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

She herself must contribute most to these objects. Has she not the generally esteemed consort of my brother, daily before her eyes as an example?

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Granting that this popular and admirable lady

sets her an excellent example, we must remember that our daughter has not her experience, and is of a very quick temperament.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Our daughter should learn how to govern herself, and to follow the example of her mother-in-law.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

This is well said, and cannot but be effective if executed in like manner; but how can our daughter be brought to do this? I cannot tell why such frightful presentiments should overpower me when I consider our daughter's honest yet misunderstood character, her quick sensibility, her firmness when her mind is once convinced, and the consequences that may be produced by it. Whenever I am left by myself and think of Sophy, the most miserable thoughts are always recurring to my mind.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

These are only speculations into a futurity which we cannot penetrate, and therefore they ought to be dismissed, that we may not embitter our lives. But, as Königsmark will remain here a few hours on his journey, you may make your inquiries

respecting our daughter from him, to whom her situation and condition cannot but be known. At another time we may resume this subject, at present I have business to transact. [*Exit.*

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

I cannot account for the terrible presentiments by which I am overwhelmed when I think of my daughter's situation, and to what this may lead. She meets her husband only once or twice during the week at the most. In company, he seldom, if ever, talks to her, whilst he amuses himself with others, and looks for their conversation. How unhappy I should feel, were I unable to converse frequently with my dear George, every day as long as he lives in the same building with me. What a fate is hers, that, sometimes during a whole week, her husband does not exchange a word with her, though at every opportunity he conducts an animated conversation with Mademoiselle Schulenburg, who is in greater favour with him than any other lady,—even than Madame Weyke. My daughter must certainly feel this the more bitterly, when she recalls the attention that once was shown to her.

Enter KÖNIGSMARK.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Having heard of your arrival, I was in hopes of seeing you, and am glad you have come so soon, because I wish to hear from you respecting my daughter's affairs.

KÖNIGSMARK.

She sends her most filial love, and has directed me to state that her Prince and Princess are well, and that she hopes speedily to revisit Zelle.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

My daughter has told me you can furnish the best information respecting her present situation. Therefore I request you will give faithful answers to all the questions I may ask,—even supposing they should throw my daughter or her husband's conduct in a disadvantageous light.

KÖNIGSMARK.

I shall endeavour to obey your commands, but at the same time I beg leave to venture a solicitation that you will pardon me should I not be able to answer all your questions.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

How does Mademoiselle Schulenburg behave towards my daughter?

KÖNIGSMARK.

The young lady knows how to exhibit herself in an unvarying gentleness, as if she were a victim, though at the same time she is greatly favoured by the Crown Prince, who pays her particular attention.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Has my daughter, when observing this, remarked that she is disregarded, compared with the manner in which the young lady is treated, and have others made the like observations?

KÖNIGSMARK.

I am sorry to say that such remarks have been made, as I must conclude from conversations of different persons with Mademoiselle Knesebeck.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

In what light is the conduct of Mademoiselle Schulenburg towards my daughter to be considered?

KÖNIGSMARK.

I am convinced I have perceived that the young lady frequently tries to begin a conversation with the Princess, who, however, shows her how to keep her distance, and this so pointedly, that it is said she has more than once complained of her to the Crown Prince.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

My daughter has informed me that you will make me acquainted with the transactions at Hanover, and everything concerning her and her husband, as also that you have heard a conversation respecting her between the Crown Prince and Mademoiselle Schulenburg.

KÖNIGSMARK.

If I am aware that some words were exchanged respecting the Princess, I am totally ignorant of their meaning.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Has the disregard with which my daughter has treated Mademoiselle Schulenburg really been so remarkable, that the latter has had reason to complain to the Crown Prince, and that his highness has mentioned it to my daughter?

KÖNIGSMARK.

This I cannot say.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Has not your sovereign, in reference to the Countess Platen and the Crown Prince, in respect to Mademoiselle Schulenburg, reproached you and cautioned you to alter your behaviour towards them?

KÖNIGSMARK.

I must acknowledge that they have both put some questions to me on this account, and in particular my sovereign has testified his displeasure respecting circumstances that very possibly were not represented by the ladies in a true light. I proved that I had not neglected the requisite attention: this, however, was not very graciously received, nor carried to my credit.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

I have heard that your choice is determined, and may at once congratulate you.

KÖNIGSMARK.

I regret not being able to return my dutiful thanks to your highness on that account; the rumour which I have already had occasion to contradict arises most probably from mistake; for as to the intention of fixing my choice on the Countess Platen's daughter, though others have pretended it to be the case, I could never have entertained such a notion, even if it had been sincerely proposed to me, though I cannot deny that her mother has, on different occasions, suggested such a thing for my consideration, during my frequent visits.

Enter DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

How do you do, Königsmark? I am glad to see you. You have for some time been expected.

KÖNIGSMARK (*preparing to leave*).

At your highness's service.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Are you in great haste?

KÖNIGSMARK.

I must speedily depart, that I may not miss the object of my journey.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

In that case I wish you a happy journey.

[*Exit Königsmark.*

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Have you learned all you wish regarding our daughter?

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

I am sorry to say I have not,—for still I cannot entirely comprehend her letters.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Come with me into my cabinet. There we may read them undisturbed.

THE COURT FAVOURITE.

HANOVER 1693.

Princess Sophia Dorothea, Mademoiselle Knesebeck.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

You believe, then, that the jealousy of the Countess Platen is not merely the creation of my imagination, but that it is observed by every one. Surely she would not otherwise have troubled herself about Königsmark's visits; they could not be anything to her. Besides it is really remarkable, that she has let this become perceptible to the Count.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

The conduct of the Countess, however, also apparently verifies my supposition, that you, my gracious Princess, are strictly watched, and all

your actions represented to your disadvantage, and this to a greater extent than you think. Because, since the jealousy and ambition of the Countess became known, every trifling accident—probably only an imaginary disregard of her wishes to please, and be esteemed above others,—will awaken her desire for revenge, which, if directed towards a certain object, might become very dangerous.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

If this desire has been produced, and if she be tormented by jealousy, the first may be rendered less dangerous by the other; and if she suffer for her own faults she undoubtedly cannot make this a reason to condemn others.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

Supposing even that in the accomplishment of her designs, she should not appear eager to crush some one in her way, still she is a dangerous woman who would be more desirable as a friend than a foe, and from whose enmity I should always wish to guard your highness.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

But it is impudent of her beyond all bearing,

to reproach Königsmark for his visits to me, and imperatively command him to discontinue them, when, some two years since, she induced him to visit me as frequently as opportunity allowed.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

Consequently, it is undoubtedly shown by her, that she leaves no means untried, that could afford her the slightest prospect of success, to approach her object, and that she does not scruple to act as circumstances may render most favourable for accomplishing her intentions.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Therefore, when Königsmark told me of the remarks of the Countess, it was well I hinted to him that it would be advisable not to pay his visits so frequently. If he has anything to communicate to me he may write to you, or he may send the letters for me directed to you. This will make amends for his visits, and we shall acquaint each other with all we should have communicated during our interviews.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

I shall willingly do all in my power to fulfil your wishes. Moreover, I consider it my duty, and

should be greatly rejoiced were I able to contribute to your peace of mind, that you might regain your cheerful temper, and think no more of past annoyances.

A PROFITLESS APPEAL.

Zelle, 1694.

Duke George William and Duchess Eleonore.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

It is long since last we saw our daughter; but now, though she intended only to change her travelling-dress, and pass a few moments with her children, she absents herself for a very long time, which is the more strange, as she has to tell us so many more things than she wrote.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

We shall speedily see her again. We must allow her time, and consider everything for her benefit, as possibly she may prove to be the injured party.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Have you not observed something peculiar in her looks—particularly when gazing on her children?

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Nothing very peculiar; but she seems to me to have become more sedate, less hasty, and a little more tranquil or thoughtful.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

I fear that her strange looks have been produced by grief. I must confess I do not know what to think of it.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

I am satisfied this is merely fancy.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

I shall be rejoiced if I am mistaken. I fear there is something amiss, and something worse the matter than I can gather from her letters. We shall now see her alone. I shall immediately make inquiries, which I could not venture to do in the presence of any of the attendants, and which I did not like to begin till she had partaken of some refreshment. But as soon as she returns I shall at once ask her why she wears such melancholy and sorrowful looks. Pray, then, do not

interrupt us—for the secrets of a woman and a mother cannot be divulged to the other sex.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

What can cause her sorrow? She has all she can desire. If she has secrets you may have them all to yourself.

Enter PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

After all, my dear parents, I have returned to the parental home, and to you, my dear mother. Oh, how much I have wished for this! The happy days I passed in your society I shall never see again!

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Why not? You have two very beautiful children; and you live too in such a brilliant capital as Hanover, in a style every way becoming a princess.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

I also do not see what can be wanting to complete your happiness.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Everything is wanting to me that can produce peace of mind, and content of soul, and real earthly happiness.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Why are you not satisfied with your apparently brilliant position, and particularly with two such lovely children?

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

I wish I could be so; but the self-contentment, the true homely happiness I felt when I lived with you, my dear parents, I have entirely lost, and most probably it will never return again.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

I hope that this is not your fault?

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Dear father! though I have informed my mother by writing of my unhappy position, and also mentioned that these marks *(points to her neck)* remain from my last meeting with my husband, I have but to explain the cause to represent sufficiently my unfortunate state. *(Duchess Eleonore and Duke George William inspect the marks on the neck of the Princess.)*

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Is this possible! What has been the matter, my dear daughter?

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

This is nothing dangerous, though very strange. Indeed it is an extraordinary thing.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

At once tell us the whole affair calmly, my dear daughter. My dear Sophy, tell us all your sufferings.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

The coolness, some time since existing between me and the Crown Prince is known, as also, I regret to say, it has rather increased than diminished, when I heard that he had mentioned me to the then Madame Busche as the daughter of a foreign woman; and also a short time subsequently, in the presence of others, he was pleased to refer to me as a woman vain, jealous, and of a hasty disposition. Besides—

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Who told you this?

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

If this has only been told me by other parties, I have myself heard enough of it to render such evidence unnecessary to convince me of the truth of what has been stated. Besides, the conduct of the Crown Prince made this more certain, as he has frequently applied the words, *violent*, *jealous*, *vain*, *stubborn*, *irritable*, and similar indecorous words, in my hearing, after I had answered some

of his questions, or commented on some of his replies to mine.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

These are, however, old stories, and ought to be forgotten. But proceed.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Perhaps it would be better were we not to interrupt Sophy again, except on such points as require explanation. Now pray go on, my dear daughter.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

I have frequently been surprised at the haughty manner, the ambitious conduct, and the costly dresses of the Countess Platen, but never expected that she would carry her intrigues so far as to strive to misrepresent me to my dear uncle and respected father-in-law. That she has tried this repeatedly I perceived from his different questions—such as "Where had I been? With whom had I conversed?" and the like; as also, upon my replies, he has made remarks in which it was hinted that the Countess Platen, or Mademoiselle Schulenburg, had otherwise informed him or his son, and that he had expected to hear something quite different to what I had told him.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Are you then not so high in his favour as you used to be?

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

It is far from my intention to complain of my uncle's conduct, but rather to praise his kindness and courtesy; but what I have just mentioned, if even uttered as a jest, nevertheless must wound, or at least does so at the first moment.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

What then, in particular, has the Countess Platen done to offend you?

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

One of these things is, that she has tried to involve me in Molcke's affair, of which I was accidentally informed, and instituted further inquiries: and in this way, by treating the matter lightly, I learned all that had been done to induce him to implicate me, and that even great advantages were offered him if he would testify to my participation in his criminality.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

By whom were you told this?

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

By several persons, of whom I asked the par-

ticulars in a careless manner. But how could I have acted so obviously against my own interests and those of my dear children?

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

There you are right, and there the Countess has made a mistake. But have you done anything regarding this strange affair?

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

It was not this subject only that made me desirous of conversing with the Crown Prince, who at that time was absent on a journey. But, some days later I was walking with my children by the side of my equipage, when I met an old woman to whom I had sometimes given alms. She thanked me, but gave me at the same time to understand she cursed the offspring of Mademoiselle Schulenburg. By further inquiries I ascertained that this young lady had lately been brought to bed, which caused me not a little agitation.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Ah! then my suppositions are verified! But pray proceed.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

These are misfortunes enough; but what did you do on receiving this intelligence?

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

On my return with Mademoiselle Knesebeck, in the carriage, I told her in my irritation my opinion on the subject. She tried all in her power to pacify me; but, soon after this I also learned that the Crown Prince had told one of his confidants, that he had been informed by Mademoiselle Schulenburg, she had positive intelligence I was affected by a certain malady, and that in consequence he could not submit to live with me any more. Had I not previously been irritated, I certainly should then have become so, but having given my promise to calm myself, I tried to conceal my painful emotion. Oh, my dear mother! you must have learned my feelings by perusing my letters.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

To calm yourself was the best thing you could do. But pray go on.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

On the return of the Crown Prince I went to him the following morning, and spoke to him first on the affair of the Countess Platen. He abruptly stated he could not interfere, and still less could he do so in the matter of Molcke's trial. Then I mentioned what Mademoiselle Schulenburg was

said to have told him, and spoke of how much he favoured her, and of the daughter she had given birth to in the preceding year, which her sister had given out as her own, and named Petronelle Melusine.*

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

This undoubtedly was too hasty, and very thoughtless of you.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

It was quite impossible our dear daughter could allow such transactions and offences to pass unnoticed, as long as she possessed any sense of female honour. Tell us, therefore, what subsequently happened. Oh my presentiments!

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

To be brief, I will only say that the Crown Prince gave me very bitter, short, yet evasive answers, whilst I insisted on an answer to the purpose, and a proper apology. He then told me to leave the room; but, as I insisted on my de-

* In England she passed as her mother's niece. George I. created her, in the year 1722, Baroness of Aldborough and Countess of Walsingham. She was subsequently married to the celebrated Earl of Chesterfield, and died in 1776, without leaving issue.

mands, he tried to push me towards the door. I resisted. He commanded me to be quiet, and after further altercation, he pressed me towards the wall, and would have strangled me by grasping my neck, had I not called for assistance. Then Mademoiselle Knesebeck and some servants carried me almost senseless to my chamber.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

You ought to have told everything calmly, and to have shown yourself more gentle. Such violence would then certainly not have occurred. Consequently, the whole affair has been caused by your turbulence, and arises solely from your hasty temper.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Supposing Sophy ought to have acted with more mildness, to attain a more satisfactory settlement of this business, it is not to be denied that she has experienced treatment the most shocking and unheard of. Oh my dear daughter!

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Having previously received permission to visit you, my dear parents, this occasioned my writing to you only partially on these matters, but Stechinelly

can inform you whatever else you may wish to know. But to prevent my being again exposed to such cruel treatment, I beg leave to remain with you, my dear parents; to be permitted to live with you, to be the companion of my mother, and here to finish my days.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

After the occurrences of which you have informed us, this certainly appears to me most advisable. Are you not, my dear George, of the same opinion?

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

I think it would be better for her to return to Hanover, in order, if possible, to obtain a reconciliation with her husband.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

This is impossible, since I have received such proofs of his intentions, and bear such marks of the treatment I experienced.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Would it not be best for her to remain here? Should she return, she might be exposed to much more cruel treatment, and assuredly this ought to be avoided as long as possible.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

This may easily be done, if no cause be given for it.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

But you must agree that it is impossible I can consent to the audacious overbearing conduct of the Countess Platen, and the shocking behaviour of Mademoiselle Schulenburg, together with the disregard shown to me by the Crown Prince.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Take your esteemed and revered aunt and mother-in-law as your example, and observe how quietly, while maintaining her elevated station, she conducts herself.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

This may be, and has been, even when I have represented to her the ambition, the boasting, and the craving for distinction, and in many other respects the improper behaviour of both the light females I have mentioned, particularly the indecorous conduct of the wife of the first minister at Hanover, for whom she has always an excuse. Therefore I cannot live any longer with the Crown Prince. I prefer a peaceful existence

retired from the world, and attending only to my children and their welfare, to subjecting myself to the tyranny of such a man.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Be calm, my dear daughter; remember that my advice can contribute only to your welfare. You need not humble yourself. You may live with as much honour, regard, and quietude, as your highly-esteemed mother-in-law.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

It is quite impossible. Listen, I implore you, my dear father, to the deep and fervent prayers of my mother and your only child, and let me remain in solitude and peace with my mother.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Yes, my dear George, consent. I unite my solicitations with those of your daughter. Before you determine, pray ask Bernstorf's opinion.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Well, I am content. But whatever he advises must, without fail, be done. I believe he is in the palace. If, then, I meet him, I shall send him directly, that you may talk with him.

[*Exit Duke George William.*

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Consequently, if we can only induce Bernstorf to be of our opinion, your desire will be accomplished.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

I can scarcely expect he will think differently from my father, because he is sent by him. Moreover, he is too much interested for the Hanoverian court, and is ready to do anything to show his subserviency. I also believe he has already been instructed by Count Platen, from whom he has received a letter by one of my servants, who informed me of it, but begged it might not be known.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

This is most likely. But, as the Countess Platen still entertains her sovereign with the idea that the Lüneburg and Hanoverian territories might be held separate, and as Duke Antony Ulrick will omit nothing likely to effect this separation, or at least to gain some part, I also doubt whether Bernstorf will advise your remaining here. However, we will leave nothing untried. It is therefore most advisable, in the first place, to make

him acquainted with all that has happened, and then show him how much it would be to his advantage to favour your staying here.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

But where are my dear children to remain? It would be impossible for me to live separated from them. We must therefore also ask his opinion on this point.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

It is evident that he is not in the palace, otherwise he would have been here before this. It will be best that I first ask him to favour us with his opinion on a subject of importance, with a compliment on his abilities, which he is not in the habit of hearing from me, because on many things we entertain different opinions. Afterwards you may represent to him the whole affair, and should he appear inclined to favour your wishes, we will immediately request your father's decision.

Enter BERNSTORF.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

I am rejoiced to see you, being desirous of profiting by the advice of a gentleman so well versed in every department of knowledge, and who is the

more welcome from the high opinion which my husband entertains of his judgment. I requested you to be informed that I wished to see you on a very important subject, in order that you might grant me your assistance.

BERNSTORF.

Your highness cannot but be well aware how highly honoured I must feel myself, if my opinion be asked even in ordinary cases; but, when sought in important affairs the compliment must be doubly flattering.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

I do not know whether you are acquainted with the business on which your advice is required. Has the Duke informed you?

BERNSTORF.

It most probably, as my gracious sovereign mentioned, concerns his illustrious daughter.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Is anything regarding it known to you?

BERNSTORF.

His highness has partly informed me.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Then my daughter can make you acquainted with the rest, that you may hear all the circumstances consecutively.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Has not Count Platen written to inform you of the unhappy state of my affairs with the Crown Prince?

BERNSTORF.

The Prince has been mentioned in a letter I have received from Count Platen.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Has he not also mentioned myself, and what has occurred between me and the Crown Prince?

BERNSTORF.

It has partly been stated in this letter.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Does the communication you have this day received contain anything on the subject of my last interview with the Crown Prince?

BERNSTORF.

Such interview is mentioned in it.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Consequently you are acquainted with all that has happened, and the terrible treatment I have endured?

BERNSTORF.

I do not know to which incident your highness alludes.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Are you not aware there was an intention to involve me in Molcke's affair—that Mademoiselle Schulenburg has given birth to a daughter—and that the Prince acquainted a third party of my most private transactions with him? Surely Platen must have informed you?

BERNSTORF.

He mentioned something of the kind.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Will it then be necessary to make you acquainted with every particular of these transactions?

BERNSTORF.

Everything that your highness has told my sovereign may be told to me.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Yet you know all, though you gave us reason to believe you knew nothing.

BERNSTORF.

I must solicit your indulgence for not having immediately mentioned the subject after it had been partly communicated to me with a command to give my opinion.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

As you know all, it would be superfluous to

explain the horrid treatment my daughter has received; in consequence of which she wishes to remain with me. What do you advise?

BERNSTORF.

I think the indulgence of such a wish might create difficulties.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

I do not see why. Because I am no prisoner; and surely I need not subject myself to the tyranny of any one.

BERNSTORF.

Certainly not; but will the Crown Prince consent to this?

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

His consent I hope I need not ask.

BERNSTORF.

But a wife is always subject to the reasonable wishes of her husband, and bound to live in accordance with them,—and from this general rule no illustrious marriage can be excepted, as much for showing a good example as for the public benefit.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

I do not see how the public can suffer by my living with my mother.

BERNSTORF.

Moreover, it cannot be foreseen what might happen after the death of my gracious sovereign, and after the union of the Lüneburg and Hanover territories, when they shall be governed by the present Crown Prince.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Nevertheless, I would rather suffer anything than return to the Crown Prince.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Is it, then, your unalterable opinion, that my daughter should return to her husband?

BERNSTORF.

Without doubt this is most advisable, and is the best means of effecting a reconciliation, which is as much the wish of the illustrious family at Hanover as of my sovereign.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Consequently, you will not advise the Duke to allow my daughter to remain with me.

BERNSTORF.

As long as a reconciliation is desired, and as long as I regard the interests of your highness and the Princess, I dare not give such advice.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Then you mean to subject me to the tyranny of a man who finds pleasure only in the freedom of a camp?

BERNSTORF.

Assuredly not, so long as a reconciliation is possible, which is heartily desired. Dare I venture to ask permission to withdraw?

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Tell the Duke we have not been able to agree in our opinion.

BERNSTORF.

At your highness's service.

[*Exit Bernstorf.*

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

What a terrible pedantic fellow! who, before he can be made to confess his knowledge of a thing, causes so many questions to be asked him, yet is all the while acquainted with the particulars, and probably has received more intelligence from Hanover than we can guess.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

He has done more harm than good to your request.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Of this I also am convinced.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

But it certainly is a matter of great consideration, that, if we survive your father, it is impossible to say what might happen to either of us.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

I shall ask my father once more most urgently and determinedly.

Enter DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Have you now heard Bernstorf's advice?

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Yes, dear George, he has advised that Sophy should return to Hanover.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

This is impossible. I would rather suffer anything than subject myself again to the treatment I have experienced, if I can only see my children.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Bernstorf being completely of my opinion, I must beg of you, my dear daughter, to consider the future, and, if you still love me, and still re-

spect the advice of your father, return and endure everything, rather than make this your place of abode. Remember, your honoured mother-in-law is universally revered and esteemed, and stands in a more elevated position than yourself. You have even told me, a short time since, how calmly, and with what admirable dignity she always conducts herself.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Am I then to be abandoned by the whole world—even by my father, and subjected to slavery and the most tyrannical treatment all my life?

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Dear George, is there no possibility of fulfilling the wishes of our daughter? Remember she is our only child—our sole comfort in our old age.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

But, my dear Eleonore, remember at the same time what may arise from such a separation. Reflect, as Bernstorf observed to me, on what may happen after my death, when my country will be united with the states of my brother. Consider, too, the welfare of our subjects; and taking all these things together, you will certainly advise Sophy to return.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

These are certainly very important considerations. But perhaps Sophy might come hither annually for some months, or several weeks, and then return to Hanover.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Neither can I consent to this. My dear Sophy, let me beg you if you love me as a parent return at once, although I am aware you may have permission to remain here some weeks. But you should show that it is you who offer the hand of reconciliation.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Then here from my parents, where I looked for peace and comfort, I am to be repulsed. I must go back this day, though I have not rested from the fatigue of the journey; my children, my sole comfort, have scarcely arrived, yet must hurriedly be sent away with me. Well, I will order everything to be prepared for my return.

[*Exit Princess Sophia.*

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

My dear George, is it then so entirely impossible to find a way to retain our daughter?

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

It is. She is again in a passion, and will hurt herself most by it. Go and quiet her, and try to subdue her violence.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

I will. But pray come with me to our grandchildren. You may converse with them whilst I talk to her.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Certainly, my dear Eleonore, this is best.*

* This conversation contains an account of the *fracas* between Sophia Dorothea and her husband, which forms so prominent a feature in the biographies of this unfortunate Princess hitherto published. They represent the Crown Prince as knocking his wife down with his fist, and one authority states that he dragged her by her hair, and dashed her on the floor at his feet; but there is little doubt that the Princess has here recorded what really took place on this lamentable occasion.

SCENE AT THE PALACE OF HERRN-HAUSEN.

HANOVER, 1694.

Duke Ernest Augustus and Duchess Sophia.

DUKE ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

I SHOULD like to know what our daughter-in-law tells her parents; and whether she will induce my brother to demand a separation.

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

This I do not anticipate, because your brother is too determined, and keeps his word as long as it remains in his power.

DUKE ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

The Countess Platen has drawn my attention to this subject, because she has her apprehensions

in accordance with a letter she has received from Wolfenbüttel, where Maximilian and Duke Antony Ulrick are again plotting new schemes to keep my brother's and my own country separated.

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

Therefore it would be as well to induce our daughter-in-law to return and be reconciled to our son.

DUKE ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

Platen has written for that purpose to Bernstorf, and if he can persuade his sovereign, this will certainly be effected. He expects an answer to-day.

Enter COUNT PLATEN.

DUKE ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

Well, what news do you bring?

COUNT PLATEN.

I bring news from Bruckhausen,* that the Princess will return to-day, because she has not met with the reception from her father she anticipated, and has therefore decided on returning without delay.

* The residence of the Duke of Zelle.

DUKE ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

Do you know what happened there?

COUNT PLATEN.

This communication (*hands a letter*) contains the particulars.

DUKE ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

This will explain many things.

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

I expected, without a doubt, that she would have stopped a week there; this appears rather a hasty resolution of my daughter-in-law.

Enter PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS *and* COUNTESS PLATEN.

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

I have just now been informed that the Princess is to return to-day.

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

Yes, my dear George; but now it must rest with you to receive her as affectionately as she has a right to expect, that your differences, though they have been partly created by her violence, may be terminated, and that you may at last live together comfortably. Remember, at the same time, that you are not to offend the sensitive feelings of a lady.

But being convinced of your just and reasonable disposition, I have no doubt you will agree with me, when I advise you to be very careful in your behaviour towards your consort.

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

But how is it possible to remain quiet under such reproaches as she made me? Whenever I commenced talking, she took up every word upon which to make a long scolding speech in French, containing many undeserved reproaches, and even outrageous insults.

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

A married lady who loves her husband ought not to offend him while she confines herself to reasonable, true, and proper reproaches respecting his conduct towards her, including the disregard which she has experienced.

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

But she accused me of things absolutely false, which she declared I had said to an officer who was praising her.

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

That you ought to have explained.

DUKE ERNEST AUGUSTUS. (*Returns the letter, having perused it.*)

Here is neither time nor place to talk of these matters. Your consort, my dear daughter-in-law, will arrive here very soon.

Enter a SERVANT.

SERVANT.

An out-rider brought the information that her highness the Princess will arrive immediately.

[*Exit Servant.*

DUKE ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

Is everything in readiness to lodge her and her children here in Herrnhausen?

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

Her own apartments and those for her children are always ready for her.

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

They will certainly be all very much fatigued after their journey to Bruckhausen and back, and require rest.

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

The children will find pleasure in travelling, and the good health of my consort is not likely to be injured by it.

COUNTESS PLATEN (*at a window*).

Here comes the equipage of the Princess.

DUKE ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

Hasten, George, and receive her.

[*Exit Prince George Lewis.*

DUCHESS SOPHIA (*looking out of a window*).

The Princess makes signs to pass by the palace.

DUKE ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

Really, she is going on to Hanover!

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

Is everything ready for her reception there?

Enter PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

The lady has passed by, and has deceived me.

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

Who knows but she may have something to do in Hanover, and will, without doubt, as soon as her toilet is finished, return to us.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

It does not appear so, as the Princess sends word to have everything prepared for her lodging there.

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

But she will certainly visit us here, George, and it will be best for you to fetch her.

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

I do not find myself so disposed, and wish to remain here.

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

Then I shall send a message to request her company. Do you not think, dear Ernest, that this is best?

DUKE GEORGE ERNEST.

Certainly.

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

Did you not mention, my dear Count, that you had a letter from Bernstorf? (*Taking it quickly.*)

COUNT PLATEN.

Yes, your highness. Dare I read it aloud?

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

No; I will not trouble you. (*Reads the letter.*)

DUKE ERNEST AUGUSTUS.

It would be better to have the letter read to you.

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

Why! How is it possible she can have in-

formed her parents of such things! (*Continues to read.*)

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

Letters exchanged between third parties must not be read without permission.

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

This is horrid! What will her parents—what must her uncle think of me? (*Reads.*)

COUNTESS PLATEN.

He must certainly think the best of his nephew and son-in-law, because he knows the temper of his daughter.

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

This is more than I anticipated: had I expected this, she should not have been allowed to visit her parents.

COUNT PLATEN.

Her highness has very quickly returned.

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

This is a proof of her violence, and if she has only proceeded to Hanover to arrange her toilette, shows her excessive vanity.

DUCHESS SOPHIA.

My dear George, you ought not to find fault but praise the really numerous excellences of

your consort. Have you not yourself confessed, that with all her violence, she was perfect kindness—that she would rather deprive herself of anything to assist others—that she loved your children above all things—and that in reality she had many excellent qualities, for which she deserved to be esteemed and honoured by every one?

PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS.

This she was several years ago: but I acknowledge she is very charitable and kind-hearted, but also violent and jealously inclined.*

* Various characters have been published of the Duchess Sophia. In some she is accused of the most revolting crimes, in others she is represented adorned with every virtue and accomplishment. So marked a difference arises from the zeal or hatred of the describer, he being in one case a noted Hanoverian partizan, and in the other as bigoted a Jacobite. The Princess, as in this conversation, frequently speaks of her with affectionate respect; but all testimony of any value shows that, though a woman of some talent, she possessed extremely little principle, and was most remarkable for a total indifference to all feminine sensibilities and sympathies.

DIARY OF CONVERSATIONS.

PART III.

THE IMPRISONMENT.

THE SLANDERER DISAPPOINTED.

HANOVER, 1694.

The Elector Ernest Augustus, and Countess Platen.*

COUNTESS PLATEN.

SURELY it cannot by any possibility be considered otherwise than that the wilful and inconsiderate Königsmark has forgotten his duty, or that under the excitement of intoxication, he has permitted himself so far to lose his senses, as to make and maintain at the table of the Elector of Saxony, assertions which he can never substantiate.

* The Duchy of Hanover had recently been raised to the dignity of an Electorate.

THE ELECTOR.

It is really unpardonable to state what you have mentioned when the mind is under proper control. But are you sure Königsmark was not completely tipsy when he hazarded, as you suppose, the statements regarding yourself, your sister, and Mademoiselle Schulenburg, and which you affirm he made to amuse the company?

COUNTESS PLATEN.

I have this day received a second letter from Dresden, which represents the affair even in a worse light. It appears from it that Königsmark had repeatedly, after representing my sister and Mademoiselle Schulenburg as intriguing courtezans, uttered the most horrid libels of me. It is also there stated that my profligacy had reached such a height as to have produced the most abominable consequences; this he is said to have repeatedly stated and affirmed, adding many other villanous things I do not like to mention.

THE ELECTOR.

If Königsmark has been guilty of this he is very reckless, and his conduct deserves punishment.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

All that I have stated has not only been mentioned, but repeatedly affirmed by him, whenever any one in the company contradicted or doubted his assertions. But if this alone be not punishable, it certainly shall be so to defame my reputation, and to utter similar slanders of my sister and Mademoiselle Schulenburg in the most unpardonable manner, founded entirely upon falsehoods, by which their honour as well as mine may suffer, and possibly be lost for ever, should such conduct be allowed to pass unnoticed. If the calumny remain unquestioned, we must be despised, disregarded, and treated with contempt. But the conduct of Königsmark has been still further punishable, as he has also added to what I have already named, that the Princess was suffering undeservedly under the tyranny of a hard-hearted husband, who delighted only in war, and whose marks left on her neck, by the cruel treatment she had experienced at his hands, she had shown to her parents. Is it possible that this can remain unpunished?

THE ELECTOR.

Has Königsmark said all this?

COUNTESS PLATEN.

He has not only mentioned, but as I have already stated, has repeatedly affirmed everything, and what must make the matter still worse, is, that his abominable tongue has not even spared his sovereign and the Crown Prince in averring that principally myself, with the aid of Mademoiselle Schulenburg, had the conducting of affairs; that our ambitious, proud, overbearing, and intriguing conduct not only remained unnoticed, but that we were even favoured in our proceedings, and that consequently the beautiful, innocent, and suffering Princess felt herself neglected and improperly treated.

THE ELECTOR.

Give me the letters, that I may inquire into this affair. If all you have said has been stated by Count Königsmark, he assuredly deserves punishment.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

If he can, even when intoxicated, forget his duty, so far as to speak to the disadvantage of his sovereign, and continue for a considerable period to make such degrading assertions, surely it amounts to high treason, a crime that can only be washed out by his blood.

THE ELECTOR.

But let Königsmark's conduct be as punishable as it may, by all means there must first be a proper inquiry before anything can be done. It is impossible to examine him immediately on your information, or on the letter of any individual obliged to quit the court of Zelle on account of my daughter-in-law, and whose hatred is directed against her and Königsmark, before better testimony and more accurate information are obtained. But I have already treated him on account of this affair more distantly since his return; moreover, I can do nothing more in these transactions till I obtain further and undoubted proofs of his misconduct. Platen has written to this effect, and I expect an answer shortly, but until it arrives, all must go on quietly.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

But the reports in circulation here afford undeniable proofs of his crime, and should be, I think, a reason for believing the contents of the letters I have received.

THE ELECTOR.

Certainly such reports contribute to excite suspicions against him, but they cannot be taken as

undeniable information, and I should not like to punish a person who might be innocent.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

Then, until such proofs arrive, I shall be obliged to endure in silence the slander that must affect the reputation of myself and of my sister. If, however, Königsmark could only be dismissed the service as colonel of the guards, since he has been guilty of such criminal language, both by report of the letter and the general rumour, I should be better satisfied. Who knows whether he has not a private understanding with the Duke of Wolfenbüttel, and what secrets he conceals in this matter?

THE ELECTOR.

This is something also deserving careful attention, therefore his conduct and proceedings shall be closely watched.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

Since, by the permission of your highness, all the actions of the Princess have been narrowly observed, and I have been made acquainted with her proceedings, it has occurred to me, regarding all that has been elicited, that it is not impossible that a secret understanding exists between them,

in order to obtain for the Duke of Wolfenbüttel, if not the entire sovereignty of the Lüneburg territory, at least a portion of it.

THE ELECTOR.

This might very possibly be the design of the court of Wolfenbüttel, nevertheless, I cannot by any possibility believe that my daughter-in-law could act in opposition to the interests of her children, whom she loves beyond anything.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

The Princess having, however, already shown by her conduct towards her husband how revengefully she can act, it certainly does not appear an impossibility that she might for once consult her revenge alone, without considering the interest of her children. For her violence, I am sorry to say, has been more than sufficiently manifested in many of her proceedings. Moreover, Königsmark most probably has left nothing untried to gain a secret understanding with her, and I am in hopes very soon to bring your highness a striking proof of the improper conduct of both towards each other, that at least I may be able to convince you I am doing all in my power to maintain the honour, credit, and dignity of my

sovereign's illustrious family, and will show this mark of my devotion very shortly.

THE ELECTOR.

As to what you have said to me concerning the improper conduct of my daughter-in-law, for the purpose of exciting my suspicions, I request that the subject may never be mentioned to mé again until you can bring me positive proof, capable of convincing me of the truth of your assertions. I know their behaviour towards each other much too well to believe anything resembling your insinuations, which, if expressed to me by any one else, I should consider a calumny. I shall continue to be the defender of my daughter-in-law, who may sometimes be hasty and violent, but she is equally charitable, kind-hearted, and noble-minded, and is highly respected by me.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

Probably I shall soon be able to produce sómething to justify my insinuations.

THE ELECTOR.

Au revoir. I shall now set about writing, which I have been prevented from doing by this long colloquy.

THE UNTIMELY INTERVIEW.

1694.

A Bedchamber-woman arranging and carrying china.

Enter KÖNIGSMARK.

KÖNIGSMARK.

Is her highness the Princess alone, and may I have the honour of waiting on her?

BEDCHAMBER-WOMAN.

I will go and inquire.

[*Exit Bedchamber-Woman.*

KÖNIGSMARK.

She appears frightened, and strangely surprised to see me. It may be that this hour, after eight o'clock in the evening, is rather an unusual one

for paying visits to a princess. But the note fixed this time precisely. (*Looking at a note.*) Though it has only been written by a pencil and somewhat in a hurry, it cannot but be the hand-writing of the Princess, and the time is mentioned in it twice.

Enter MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

The Princess did not expect you at such an unusual hour in the evening, and has sent me to inquire what you have to communicate.

KÖNIGSMARK (*Producing the note.*)

This note, which I believe has been written by the Princess, fixes this time precisely for my visit here, that I might be announced to the Princess.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

This is very strange. Because I do not think the Princess has written it. Pray who brought this note to you?

KÖNIGSMARK.

I found it this afternoon on my writing-table, and on my asking who brought it, no one could tell me. Even the most particular inquiries failed in ascertaining who had been in my

room, and placed the note on my table, or had seen it before I had arrived. Apparently it is the hand-writing of the Princess.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

It looks very suspicious. Will you permit me to show the note to the Princess?

KÖNIGSMARK.

With pleasure. If, however, it has been written by some one else, still I should venture to request a brief interview with the Princess on that very account.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

I shall return you the note immediately, with the Princess's answer.

[*Exit Mademoiselle Knesebeck.*

KÖNIGSMARK.

This looks rather a suspicious circumstance. The hand-writing does not appear exactly similar; besides being written with pencil; nor do the contents resemble any other communication from her, yet I thought the signature undoubtedly her hand.

Enter MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

The Princess not having seen you alone since

your return, and not having received the account you promised her of your last leavetaking of the Countess Platen, and how she parted from you, but principally to discover who can have dared to write such a note, consents to see you for a moment.

THE COUNT'S ARREST.

HANOVER, 1694.

Enter the Elector of Hanover.

THE ELECTOR.

Surely there must be something particular, as the Countess has scarcely taken her departure, and, although she knows I have business to attend to, requests another audience.

Enter COUNTESS PLATEN.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

I solicit your highness's pardon, for so soon intruding upon you again for a short time, but I have been induced to ask the favour of another audience for an affair of the greatest importance. It relates to Königsmark's arrival in the palace,

and at once proceeding direct to the antechamber of the Princess.

THE ELECTOR.

Are you sure it is Königsmark you allude to? It seems impossible, or I should have known it. —(*Calls.*) Here!

Enter SERVANT.

THE ELECTOR.

Is Count Königsmark in the palace?

SERVANT.

It has just now been reported that the Count is in the antechamber of her highness the Princess.

THE ELECTOR.

Very well. [*Exit Servant.*] How is it possible he could have gone at such an extraordinary hour to the antechamber of my daughter-in-law?

COUNTESS PLATEN.

This will show that what I alluded to a short time since as suspicious will shortly be proved.

THE ELECTOR.

My daughter-in-law is innocent. She has Mademoiselle Knesebeck with her.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

She may remain in the antechamber, or may be sent into an adjoining room.

THE ELECTOR.

These are terrible calumnies, which I do not like to hear. My daughter-in-law is innocent; but Königsmark must suffer for his temerity.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

This is all I require to make him confess the truth, and justify all my suspicions. But this result can only be obtained by secretly arresting him, and examining him privately, before he leaves the Castle.

THE ELECTOR.

He is Colonel of my Guards, and may enter the palace whenever he pleases; and possessing as he does the esteem and affection of his subordinates, he will assuredly not easily be arrested, and with still less ease can this be done secretly.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

Nevertheless this may readily be done, if the doors of the palace be secured. It is, therefore, advisable that this be ordered immediately, to insure success to this enterprise, and get at the truth.

THE ELECTOR.

(*Calling.*) Here!

Enter SERVANT.

THE ELECTOR.

I desire that all doors leading out of the palace be immediately secured, and that all the keys be then brought to me. Make haste.

[*Exit Servant.*

COUNTESS PLATEN.

When this order has been strictly obeyed, Königsmark will be unable to escape by a door, but this he may effect through a window. To have this arrest succeed, it is, therefore, requisite that sentinels should immediately surround the palace, to prevent any one escaping through the windows, who, whenever they perceive an attempt being made, should call for assistance; added to which, two halberdiers should observe that the sentinels be careful in continually walking round the Palace.

THE ELECTOR (*proceeding to the door and calling*).

Captain of the Guard!

COUNTESS PLATEN.

Now, if this be done, there may be a certainty

that no one can leave the Palace without being arrested; and then, if Königsmark be imprisoned, he should be examined.

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.

The Captain of the Guard.

THE ELECTOR.

Let him enter. [*Exit Servant.*

Enter CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD.

THE ELECTOR.

I desire that two patrols of halberdiers walk continually round the palace, and take care that no one, without exception, leaves the palace, either by a door, a window, or in any other way, without being arrested, and immediately conducted to me. Do you understand me? Be quick then, and fail not to execute my command.

CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD.

Certainly, your highness.

[*Exit Captain of the Guard.*

COUNTESS PLATEN.

In order to arrange this affair as secretly as possible, without attracting any notice beyond

that of the persons present, I must venture to solicit your highness to entrust me with three trabants* and a superior, who would arrest him without any noise.

THE ELECTOR.

You may certainly superintend this affair, to take care, I suppose, a fine-looking man, like Königsmark, is not hurt. I really should not have considered you so courageous for the lover of your daughter.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

Though to arrest any one is an affair most difficult and dangerous for a woman to superintend, yet as, in this instance, it is for the interest of my sovereign, I shall be obliged to put aside my feminine character, difficult as this may be for me, on such an occasion. I therefore only intend remaining in the room adjoining one through which he must pass, for the purpose of taking care that all is properly performed. But may I at once request to have the four men I mentioned, or else it will be too late?

THE ELECTOR (*calls at the door*).

Four halberdiers with their arms. (*Returns.*) Now inform me what you really intend to do.

* Yeomen of the Guard.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

As soon as Königsmark discovers that all the doors of the palace are fastened, he will, as usual, endeavour to go out the way he came, unperceived. He will then pass along the hall of state to the hall leading to the church, and thence to the other wing of the palace. Behind the large projecting chimney in the hall just mentioned, the four armed men will be placed, and I intend remaining at the door of the next room, or within it, that I there may be enabled to observe everything, and give further directions for Königsmark's arrest. When he has been secured, he may be brought into that room, and there the examination may take place, to bring him to the confession of his crimes, and to prove the correctness of my suspicions.

THE ELECTOR.

But Königsmark will not be secured so easily as you appear to imagine.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

If this cannot readily be done quietly, then force must be employed. But I think if he be unexpectedly attacked he will soon be overpowered, and be conducted wherever I please.

THE ELECTOR.

Suppose that he or any of the men should be wounded? What must be done? Therefore I wish every precaution should be taken to prevent accidents.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

If Königsmark be innocent he will not defend himself, and then will be soon secured. All wounds must be avoided, but at all risks he must be arrested, for it must be lawful to get at the truth by any means in our power.

THE ELECTOR.

Well, then, you may superintend his arrest,—but remember I make you answerable for whatever is done without my consent, and desire immediately to be informed of the arrest.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

I shall this time, as I have always done, do all in my power to execute my sovereign's commands.

THE ELECTOR (*calls.*)

Are the halberdiers there?

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.

They are waiting for orders.

THE ELECTOR.

Let them enter. [*Exit Servant.*

Enter four halberdiers with lances and swords.

THE ELECTOR.

I make you amenable to my most severe displeasure, if you fail to obey the commands of the Countess Platen, and do not execute them most punctually. Any one who shall be reported negligent may expect the most severe punishment. You are to arrest and secure the person who will be pointed out to you by the Countess. (*Waves his hand.*) [*Exeunt halberdiers.*

THE ELECTOR.

Now I hope all will be accomplished without disturbance or trouble; besides which, remember I have made you answerable should any accidents occur.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

I shall do all in my power to execute your commands as punctually as possible.

[*Exit Countess Platen.*

THE ELECTOR.

It certainly seems very singular of send a woman to superintend the arrest of one of her

former admirers,—but no doubt it is advisable that Königsmark should not be hurt, nor any one be wounded. But what must be the result should he really be guilty? No,—my daughter-in-law is certainly innocent.

KONIGSMARK'S MURDER.

HANOVER 1694.

Countess Platen and four halberdiers, concealed in the hall.

COUNTESS PLATEN (*standing within the door*).

BEHIND this chimney and the door you are all four to place yourselves in such a manner that you shall remain unperceived by the person who is to be secured during his approach along the gallery of the Saloon of Knights till he is in the centre of this hall; two of you are then to prevent his return, and all four are to attack him, to throw him on the ground in order to thrust this handkerchief in his mouth, and secure his hands with this cord. Mind it is the strict command of the Elector that the arrest be executed as quickly, and with as little noise as possible.

Whoever disregards this command will be punished, but those who pay proper attention to my directions in order that the wishes of our sovereign may be gratified, will not only be rewarded by the Elector, but also by myself. If you hear any one coming, announce it to me immediately; in the mean time empty the bottle of punch that has been brought you, and make yourselves comfortable. [*Paces the room.*] Well, I am sure I do not know what is the matter with me, I feel such cold shiverings. But, courage! I have now hopes of revenge. The sweetness of these hopes steels my nerves. But it would be well that I keep a good lpok out for his arrival. [*Goes to the door.*] Ah! he stops a long time. He ought to amuse himself well, but how unexpectedly will his visit terminate! [*To the halberdiers.*] Now! Yes! I hear some one approaching. Be very careful that two immediately cut off his retreat, and two prevent his progress,—then throw him on the ground and secure his hands. (*A pause.*)

KÖNIGSMARK (*from the hall*).

Treachery! Treachery!

COUNTESS PLATEN.

Prevent him from drawing his sword Make use

of your arms! (*Noise of fighting.*) Be bold. Fear nothing. Defend yourselves well. Strike him. Throw him down. Fling him to the ground and secure his hands.

KÖNIGSMARK (*from the hall*).

Murder me, if you will, but spare the innocent Princess!

COUNTESS PLATEN.

Do not mind him. Do not spare him for his insolence. Do not give way. Throw him on the ground.

KÖNIGSMARK.

Murder me, if you will, but spare the innocent Princess!

COUNTESS PLATEN.

One must hold each arm, the third is to throw him off his legs, and the fourth to bind his hands and then his feet, and, above all, to muffle his mouth. Tie his hands firmly. Do not spare him. Well, now he is in our power.

KÖNIGSMARK.

Spare the innocent Princess!

COUNTESS PLATEN.

Stop his mouth with the handkerchief. Stop

his wicked mouth. Tie his legs more securely, and then bring him in.

[*Enter four trabants bringing in Königsmark severely wounded. They try to make him stand. He faints.*]

COUNTESS PLATEN.

Lay him on the floor. (*They lay him down.*) Pull the handkerchief out of his mouth. (*She tries to bind up his wounds*). Now (*addressing Königsmark*) you traitor, acknowledge your guilt, and that of the Princess.

KÖNIGSMARK (*recovering, and gazing around*).

Viper, is it you?

COUNTESS PLATEN (*interrupting him*).

Traitor, do you inculpate yourself, to make your situation worse? Confess the guilt of yourself and the Princess.

KÖNIGSMARK.

Spare the innocent Princess. (*Swoons again.*)

COUNTESS PLATEN (*continuing to bind up his wounds*).

Go quickly, and fetch vinegar and water to recover him from fainting. [*Exit trabant.*

KÖNIGSMARK (*recovering.*)

You horrid——

[*He is interrupted by the Countess, who, as if by accident, while examining his wounds with a candle, pretends to be frightened, staggers, shrieks, and tramples on his mouth.*]

COUNTESS PLATEN (*perceiving Königsmark to be dying*).

Ah, what is the matter with you? Oh, what a misfortune! Endeavour to keep him alive, or try to recover him. I shall look for assistance. I am obliged to go to the Elector.

[*Exit Countess Platen.*

[*The three trabants endeavour to bind up the wound on his head, and look at him closely, shaking their heads.*]

FIRST TRABANT.

He is dead!

SECOND TRABANT.

Perfectly lifeless.

THIRD TRABANT.

This is a fine business. But we have only done our duty.

FIRST TRABANT.

I wish the Countess were here, We cannot recal him to life.

SECOND TRABANT.

I believe she is coming.

Enter the ELECTOR OF HANOVER *and* COUNTESS PLATEN.

THE ELECTOR (*looking at Königsmark*).

Possibly he may only have swooned. He looks like a corpse. You are answerable for this. He really appears to be dead. Shake him!

[*Trabants move the hands and legs, and shake the body of Königsmark.*]

FIRST TRABANT.

He does not possess the slightest motion.

SECOND TRABANT.

His eyes are fixed like those of a corpse.

THE ELECTOR.

Consequently he is dead and you have murdered him, though your commission went no farther than to arrest, and, if requisite, secure him.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

Pardon me, your highness. I certainly was commissioned only to have him secured, but at

the same time I was permitted, if it could not be effected in any other way, to employ force—in consequence of which the halberdiers were ordered to come armed. Königsmark, not having been prevented from drawing his sword, defended himself, and attacked his assailants with the fury of a madman, whereupon I desired them to use their arms to defend themselves, and to make every exertion to overpower him. Therefore it is solely to be ascribed to his violence in pressing on and attacking the halberdiers so recklessly that they were obliged to act in their own defence to prevent his wounding them. During this he was accidentally more severely wounded than was intended, and therefore his fate is to be ascribed to his mad fury and rage. This the halberdiers will acknowledge.

THE ELECTOR.

Let me know how it happened that Königsmark has been so severely wounded.

FIRST TRABANT.

He assailed me so fiercely that, though not intending to wound him, but to guard myself from the fury of his attack, I pointed my sword at him. He, designing to thrust it aside, lifted it and ran his head against the point.

SECOND TRABANT.

In the violent attack of Count Königsmark upon me, I designed to prevent his advance, and in the dark I believe I also wounded him in the arm.

THIRD TRABANT.

As I rushed behind the Count to cut off his retreat, I can only confirm what has been stated.

THE ELECTOR.

This great misfortune having happened, and as it apparently is to be ascribed only to Königsmark's violence and blind rage, it is evident he has brought his fate upon himself.

COUNTESS PLATEN.

Consequently it is desirable that the whole affair be kept quite secret, and that the body be privately buried. If some quick lime be thrown over it, it will soon decay.

THE ELECTOR.

Take the corpse out of this room.

[*Trabants bear Königsmark out of the apartment.*]

COUNTESS PLATEN.

It will now be best to have this transaction kept so secret that no inquiries shall discover the

truth; therefore the halberdiers ought to be ordered to keep silence on this subject, under the threat of the most severe punishments if they transgress.

THE ELECTOR.

Besides, it is high time everything should be arranged and every place cleansed, that no spot of blood be perceived, and that no mark of this transaction may hereafter be seen. I expect presently to hear your full justification. See that the rest be done.

[*Exit the Elector of Hanover.*

COUNTESS PLATEN.

I shall strictly obey those commands. (*Glancing at the floor.*) Now I have my revenge upon him. But, to have the corpse for ever concealed, it is advisable to cast him down a sewer and have some quick lime thrown over him, that his body may soon decay, and no vestige of it be ever again discovered, after the sewer has been walled up by thick brickwork.

TERRIBLE FOREBODINGS.

Hanover 1694.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA (*alone*).

I CANNOT conceive why, during this night, I have been unable to find any rest. When Mademoiselle Knesebeck left me, it was past midnight. Then I had commenced putting together my jewellery and trinkets in order to have them packed up without loss of time, to take them with me. It was certainly nearly morning when I had finished, and ought to be still very early. But I can find neither quietude nor rest. Moreover, I do not comprehend what noise it was I heard last night in the palace, and the running backwards and forwards appears not yet to have ceased. (*Looking from a window.*) In the next

place, I wonder why so many people are assembled near the palace, all apparently looking towards my apartments.

Enter MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Good morning! You are very early. Have you already finished your night's rest?

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

Let me venture to hope that your highness has slept better than myself; because, after going very late to bed, I have been disturbed almost all the night, by the tramping of persons backwards and forwards, and by some disturbances in the palace, where something or other is apparently still going on.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

I have also heard some unusual movements in the palace. Do you know what occasioned them?

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

I do not. But with the running to and fro no loud talking is heard. I can only distinguish a little whispering. Possibly some one is ill. But the Prince and Princess are both well.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

I have also seen them a short time since. I hope nothing has happened to Königsmark.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

I should think not, because I saw him to the end of the gallery, along the Saloon of the Knights, and then returned.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

I am glad to hear this. After you left me, I looked up my trinkets and jewels, and arranged them for packing, when it might be required.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

Is not this premature? Have the chamber-women seen it?

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

No; I did not begin arranging them till after they were gone, and believe that Königsmark will soon find the means of accompanying me to my cousin at Wolfenbüttel; therefore my trouble cannot have been thrown away.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

Have you really resolved to leave Hanover? and do you think that this can soon be done?

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Yes, I hope so. In order, as a last resource, to

get out of this place, where the caballing of the Countess Platen to involve me in Molcke's affair passes unpunished,—where the conduct, and even the lying-in of Mademoiselle Schulenburg, and the behaviour of the Crown Prince, cause me so much grief, which so increases daily that I scarcely find a quiet hour. I cannot but reflect on the horrid treatment I have experienced. I only and most sincerely regret my poor children. How bitter will be the parting from them! and when shall I see them again?

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

But last night your highness was so pleased and happy, it made me quite delighted to see you. For several years I have not seen you so well pleased and in such good humour as you were during Königsmark's visit.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

That was not surprising, for the many pleasant things narrated by the Count of everything that had passed during his travels afforded gratification to me as well as to yourself. But the circumstance of the Countess Platen having really offered him her daughter in marriage, and his refusing it in a jesting way, and the manner in

which he made this known to us, contributed greatly to my vivacity, particularly the fact that he even declined, when she told him that his compliance would afford an excuse for his frequent visits. Moreover, it was the first time since his return from Saxony that I have been able to converse privately with him in your presence, which we need not fear has been observed. Still it is a mystery how the forged note which made an appointment for him to visit me got into his hand, but apparently it has failed in its object.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

Certainly the adventures Königsmark pretends he has met with during his travels are really amusing, as is also the manner in which they were narrated; but undoubtedly they have been greatly embellished by his inventive wit, because a gentleman at large, as he is, may readily find means of making the recital of his adventures interesting.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

He is undoubtedly very witty, but I consider him also dangerous, because he talks much too freely.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

Certainly; and therefore I hope he is more

careful in other society, because, if he be not, he may easily do himself harm.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

A nobleman so accomplished and wealthy would assuredly become an ornament to any court.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

Königsmark is very rich; but when it is remembered that he possesses above thirty horses, besides the mules in his stables, and his numerous domestics, he must be extremely well off, as these are very expensive to keep. It has also been said, that his steward has several times represented to him the necessity of some better arrangement of his affairs.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Nevertheless, I hope he will be able to advance me the requisite funds to enable me to quit Hanover.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

When your highness made him acquainted with your sufferings, and the treatment you have experienced, as also that the Duke of Zelle had refused you an asylum, he recommended you to take refuge in France, which, as you did not

give your consent to it, but proposed travelling to Wolfenbüttel, to throw yourself on the protection of Duke Antony Ulrick, he appeared to give his sanction. But when he learned that your royal highness had not funds even for so short a journey, and for a brief sojourn at the place of your destination, and he was asked to advance the necessary sum, he appeared to delay his decision. When the request was repeated, he answered, that previously to your departure he was obliged to arrange some important affairs, and intended, before quitting Hanover, to give in his resignation as Colonel of the Guards. Suppose, then, he may be considered wealthy, and possessed of great resources, he may not be able to make them immediately available; or perhaps it is necessary that he should first arrange his affairs, to prevent heavy losses.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Nevertheless, he has promised within a short time to have everything prepared to leave this place, and to provide me the means.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

I hope everything may be arranged with proper caution by the Count, for there are undoubtedly

some spies who report to the Countess Platen whatever they see or guess. Even the two new bedchamber women are very suspicious characters.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA (*looking out of a window*).

I should like to know why several of Königsmark's servants keep pacing to and fro, and gazing towards my windows. Be so good as to inquire respecting this.

[*Exit Mademoiselle Knesebeck.*

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

It is strange that I feel a peculiar disquietude but cannot comprehend why. Surely it is because I shall soon leave my dear children for some time, and possibly the change from grief to happiness may have produced it. The result of Mademoiselle Knesebeck's inquiries as to the reason of the Count's servants passing so frequently before my window will no doubt satisfy me.

Enter MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

Königsmark has this moment been inquired for here. He is looked after and searched for by his

servants everywhere, but no one knows what has become of him.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

This is strange, because you saw him to the hall that leads to the other part of the palace.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

I saw him walking rapidly, and singing as he passed along the hall, but probably he is gone from here to arrange his affairs.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

This I do not believe, because he did not mention it to me; and surely he would not have gone without informing me of it.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

Where else could he be?

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Perhaps with the Countess Platen.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

Although it is so early, she has just now arrived at the palace; but I will once more make inquiries.

[*Exit Mademoiselle Knesebeck.*

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Ah! what a strange foreboding I have! Can anything have happened to him? He was so

pleasant. I hope he has met with no misfortune. But the Countess Platen's early arrival. Oh, what a misfortune it is to be a Princess! I dare not inquire after him personally without compromising myself. Still I should like to have undoubted intelligence of where he is.

Enter MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

I have this moment been informed that Königsmark's correspondence has been seized, and given to the Countess Platen for her report.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

My presentiments are confirmed by the intelligence you have brought me. He has perhaps been arrested, or has met with some other great misfortune, or else his papers would certainly not have been seized.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

Surely something very important must have happened; but I will again inquire.

[*Exit Mademoiselle Knesebeck.*

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

In this uncertainty I should like to address myself to my father-in-law. How unfortunate I

am to be kept in this state of doubt as to the true state of things. Even inquiry is not proper. I could have asked the Crown Prince, had he not gone to Berlin. Therefore I have nobody to whom I can address myself.

Enter MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

It has just now been stated that there will be no dinner with the Elector. He and the Prince* are to dine together in his apartments, and you will dine here, with no other company than myself.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Then perhaps my father-in-law will not see me. I shall therefore go to my cabinet, and write to him. In the mean time, you may endeavour to obtain further information, which you will report to me.

* Prince George, the son of Sophia Dorothea.

THE UNSATISFACTORY INTERVIEW.

ZELLE, 1794.

Duchess Eleonore.

DUCHESS ELEONORE (*alone*).

CERTAINLY a greater misfortune could not have happened. I really do not see how I can comfort my dear daughter. What an unhappy message! If the disagreeable Platen would only desist from his constant repetitions of the words relating to the Duke in my daughter's letters, and that horrid Bernstorf cease to add, as he always does, such intolerable explanations, my George might be pacified. As regards the expressions in my daughter's notes, characterising the ambitious, overbearing, and intriguing Countess Platen; the

assumed timidity yet light conduct of Mademoiselle Schulenburg; and the double-dealing and caballing proceedings of Madame Weyke, they are strong, but, I believe, not undeserved; and to refer to them as evidence that my daughter in writing in this manner had forgotten her elevated position, and maintained too close an intimacy with Königsmark, is too bad.

My daughter had no persons in Hanover in her confidence but Königsmark and Mademoiselle Knesebeck; for in so gay a place all the courtiers were impelled by intrigues and cabals to seek only their own advantage. How is it possible that everything can be turned to the disadvantage of my daughter; and the more particularly so, as she did not write the note which induced Königsmark to come to her on the unfortunate evening of the 30th of June, when he lost his life? O had she but the instant she asked for the note regarded more intently her suspicions, and done as she intended—seen him for a moment—or not have permitted him to enter her chamber after reading the note!

But where is the note? Who can have written it? Assuredly no one but a clever intriguing

woman. Why have they sent Platen? Why is he informed of all the particulars that ought not to be known to him? Why was it his wife had almost fallen into disgrace? Why was she commissioned to arrest Königsmark, and cautioned to be careful he was not hurt? Why has he, nevertheless, been murdered in her presence? Why has the correspondence of Königsmark been given to that proud overbearing woman, my daughter's worst enemy? Why was Count Platen disinclined to acknowledge all this? Why did he always evade a decisive answer to my questions on this point, before he could be induced to tell the truth? Does not all this appear suspicious? Undoubtedly very suspicious. And where is the note? where are the papers which, as one of the halberdiers confessed, were taken out of one of Königsmark's waistcoat pockets by the Countess Platen?

All things taken together lead to the suspicion that the Countess Platen wrote the note. But I dare not mention this, and accuse a woman so overbearing, powerful, intriguing, and revengeful, who would find ample evidence to prove her innocence, or at least make the Elector believe

it; I might, by so doing, lose my influence, which now may be of great assistance to my unfortunate daughter; otherwise I might oppose her with some effect. But, once more, where is the note by which Königsmark was invited? can it have been buried with him, or have been destroyed by her whom I suspect to be the authoress, in order to prevent the discovery of the writer? How craftily has all this been planned, and how carefully executed for my daughter's disadvantage!

Enter BERNSTORF.

BERNSTORF.

At your highness's desire, I have the honour to present myself.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

I feel much obliged to you, because, while engaged in so many important affairs, you have found opportunity to come and learn my request.

BERNSTORF.

I have only fulfilled my duty.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

You will soon know why I desired to see you. It relates to my daughter's unhappy position—the most unfortunate occurrence I have ever known—

and as regards it I know not how to counsel myself. On this point my mind has lost its faculties, and my understanding is deficient in every resource that should be available for such an occasion. I have, therefore, requested your assistance and your advice, the benefit of which the Duke and the whole country have had ample occasion to acknowledge, and to be gratified with.

BERNSTORF.

It is no more than my duty to obey the wishes of the distinguished consort of my sovereign, and as far as my power will admit, to forward her interests.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

If you will promise this, you will greatly oblige me. I would willingly and joyfully grant you whatever you wish that is in my power, if you would only save my daughter from her unfortunate situation, and protect her so far as to see that she be permitted to remain with me, or in this country.

BERNSTORF.

Willingly and with pleasure would I render the required assistance, but no letters having arrived as yet from the Princess, with her explana-

tion of the circumstances that have been reported here regarding her, I am sorry to say nothing can at present be done in this matter.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Consequently, no determination can be formed until the arrival of her letters, of which, however, I have received one, relating to her mournful situation.

BERNSTORF.

May I be allowed to know its contents, as far as it may afford a justification of the Princess ?

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Certainly. She has never used such improper expressions to Königsmark as would declare the existence of an illicit intercourse between them. But she does not deny having written letters to him, nor that she has received some from him through the hands of Mademoiselle Knesebeck. He commenced the correspondence, and begged several times for a written answer before my daughter wrote one. All letters, as I have just stated, passed through the hands of Mademoiselle Knesebeck ; but the letter of the 30th of June, inviting him to send in his name in my daughter's anteroom, was neither written by her nor by her desire, though it bears her signature. This letter

is consequently a forgery. Moreover, my daughter, when visited by him, has never seen him alone, but always in the presence of Mademoiselle Knesebeck, which was also the case on this unfortunate evening. The intolerable treatment she endured from her husband assuredly must also be considered in her favour; but the arrogance, haughtiness, and scandalous behaviour of the Countess Platen, and under an assumed modesty the amorous conduct, with its consequences, of Mademoiselle Schulenburg, with the similar proceedings of Madame Weyke, must also have irritated my daughter. Take into consideration everything relating to her situation, all her sufferings, and whatever else there exists of an exeusatory nature, and then let me hear your opinion.

BERNSTORF.

Even supposing all that has so graciously been told me be true, it is not denied that in the notes sent by the Princess to Königsmark, mention is made of the harshness and pitilessness of a savage, in allusion to her father's refusal of her request to remain with him and not return to her husband, and there are also references to the coquetry of favoured, haughty, and ambitious

women, which, though no names are given, represent some distinguished persons very intelligibly, with remarks extremely offensive and quite unpardonable, which, with the explanations added by the Countess Platen, assuredly amount to criminality, and show an illicit connexion with Count Königsmark.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

How can you repeat such things to me, after the Elector has repeatedly presumed my daughter's innocence? The letters I have seen that Count Platen has brought, at the most, exhibit only a painful jealousy, an abused sense of honour, and endurance of neglect, which possibly may have created erroneous views, and led to the writing of such letters during a state of violent irritation of mind. If, therefore, you and Count Platen had not acted in the unjustifiable way I believe you have, in so frequently repeating unfavourable language, and representing things in their worst aspect, and in connexion with them, introducing what was foreign and unconnected with the subject; and if the designs of the Countess Platen were not made to comprehend every trifling affair, to magnify it as much as possible to my daughter's dis-

advantage, the Duke would assuredly never have become so enraged against his once beloved child as he appears to be. I therefore once more request you to make some exertion to save my daughter from her threatened misfortunes, and shall always be most willing, if you fulfil my wishes, to reward you to the full extent of my ability.

BERNSTORF.

How is it possible I can be so greatly honoured as to see your highness before me, soliciting my interference, after it has so frequently been hinted to me, I was only to obey? But the only way it is in my power to serve the Princess is to advise a separation from her illustrious husband for a short time, that she may be brought to reflection, and to school her judgment, in order to reconcile herself to live again in harmony with the Crown Prince.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

But is it not possible to make such an arrangement for my daughter, that she may visit me during this brief separation?

BERNSTORF.

I believe the Duke will not grant this, because he is too much irritated and enraged, and his

anger cannot be easily subdued, in consequence of the recurrence to his mind of the obnoxious words used by the Princess.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

You perhaps mean, that after such words have so frequently been repeated by you and Platen, the Duke cannot forget them, particularly after you have added so many abominable explanations. I perceive, therefore, I must leave my daughter to her fate, as nothing will be done for her by you or by Count Platen.

BERNSTORF.

Surely nothing can be done for her until the Duke's just anger has abated. May I be permitted to go to his highness?

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Yes. This is a lamentable answer, and the least comfort I could have.

AN UNHAPPY PRINCESS.

Hanover, 1694.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA (*alone*).

How many nights have already passed, and I have scarcely had any rest! No refreshing sleep has, during this time, raised my spirits to enable me to endure my sufferings. The uncertainty of Königsmark's fate troubles me. Besides, what must my kind and excellent mother have said and felt at hearing the news that must have been brought to her? What sorrow and trouble must she be subjected to! She most probably will be unable to subdue the anger of my severe but good father, particularly as Count Platen is there, and has taken with him the notes I sent to Königs-

mark. Moreover, I grieve for Mademoiselle Knesebeck. She was my only sincere friend, and she has also been separated from me.

Oh what an unhappy destiny is mine, and how my misfortunes appear to gather over my head! No friend, no acquaintance I can trust, still less a confidant dare I see, not even my dear mother; and my dear children I can only behold in the presence of observers, or rather of spies, who strive to catch up every word I utter, to apply it to their purpose, and that of my enemies, and who try to discover in my expressions something to report to those worthless women who desire only to destroy me. There is no human creature to whom I can speak in confidence without hazarding all I have to say being turned by other persons to my disadvantage. (*Rings a bell.*)

Enter SERVANT.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Where is Mademoiselle Knesebeck?

SERVANT.

She is in the custody of a guard, and dare not leave her chamber.

[*Exit Servant.*

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Now that I am no more to behold my only friend, I shall amuse myself for a short time with my children. But previously I shall once more look over the Elector's very kind answer to my solicitation to go Zelle, and to let me retain the good opinion of himself and his excellent consort. (*Produces and looks at a letter.*) No. I do not like to look at it any more. I know it almost by heart.

THE PRINCESS INSULTED.

HANOVER, 1694.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA, (*alone*).

THIS painful uncertainty regarding my own fate and that of my friends almost completely destroys me. The miscarriage of my designs is certainly extremely distressing, but the uncertainty to which I am left, while deprived of every friend, is still more grievous. Oh that I could arrive at certainty!

Enter SERVANT, *announcing company, and exit; then enter* COUNT PLATEN, HUGO, *and two gentlemen.*

COUNT PLATEN.

We are sent by the most illustrious Elector to

inform your highness, that on my return from Zelle, with the answer from his Serene Highness Duke George William, respecting transactions communicated to him which have occurred here in Hanover, both the illustrious brothers agree that the consort of the Crown Prince has conducted herself in a manner that makes it impossible she should remain any longer at the court of our gracious sovereign, and consequently your highness will be conducted to the territory of Zelle, where the Castle of Ahlden has been prepared for your residence.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Then am I not to behold my dear mother, nor my children?

COUNT PLATEN.

The Duchess resides at Zelle; her grandchildren, the Prince as well as the Princess, are to remain here in Hanover.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Consequently I am to be separated from all I love, and all to whom I feel particularly attached?

COUNT PLATEN.

This appears to be the case. I have now

only to add this question. From what time have Count Königsmark's visits produced an effect on your health, and when did a change in that respect take place?

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Do you think you may insult me in this coarse and revolting manner with impunity? As if I could have conducted myself after the fashion of your worthless wife, who during your absence of nearly a year, has been in the state to which you appear to allude, from which she escaped only by resorting to unusual means.

COUNT PLATEN.

Has your highness any further commands?

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

None whatever; except that I can dispense with your presence, and that I desire to leave this place as soon as possible.

COUNT PLATEN.

The return of the Crown Prince is expected in a day or two.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Then I wish to leave before his arrival.

COUNT PLATEN.

Before I obey the gracious remark respecting

my presence, I have to mention that Count Königsmark, on the evening he quitted your highness, was to have been imprisoned; but on his arrest he so furiously defended himself with his sword, that it became necessary to assail him with weapons to enforce his submission: unfortunately he was wounded, and, in consequence, expired.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA (*crying violently*).

This is terrible! an intolerable addition to my agony and sorrow. Excellent Königsmark! my sincerest friend! my confidant! my comforter in my sufferings. Oh! would I were relieved from all I endure, for since his troubles are over, my only desire is that mine may be ended in the same manner.

COUNT PLATEN.

You are greatly afflicted at the death of your lover.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

How can I be otherwise at hearing such a horrible deed, which assuredly can only have been done at the instigation of your jealous, infamous, and ambitious wife. I shall go into my bed-room, that I may mourn undisturbed, and nourish my grief in solitude.

PERSECUTIONS OF THE PRINCESS.

ZELLE, 1695.

Duchess Elconore and Duke Antony Ulrick.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

I CANNOT sufficiently assure you, how gratefully I receive your occasional visits to the Duke, who is still mournful at times even to despondency, and moreover he is almost always so out of humour that it is seldom any one can please him.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

At present being alone, we may talk of my dear cousin, your daughter, and possibly you can give me some further information regarding the transactions which within the last few months have occurred at Hanover.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

I will do so, with pleasure. On the day she was desired to be ready to leave Hanover, she made the necessary arrangements. The next day she was again examined regarding her intimacy with Königsmark, but all that could be done, even by cross-examination, failed in obtaining the result sought by her enemies; on the contrary, her innocence became more manifest, notwithstanding she had made use of such thoughtless remarks on Platen's return from Zelle last July.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

On this I heartily congratulate you. I, too, was previously fully convinced of the falsehood of the Countess Platen's accusations. But was your daughter permitted to take her children with her?

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

This I forgot to mention; she was not allowed. On the morning after her re-examination, she took a sad and very affectionate farewell of her children. At first she could not tear herself from them, taking one and then another in her arms alternately, until she was conveyed in a state of insensibility to the carriage. How mournful a journey

she had with Madame Ilten to Ahlden, where she is at present, you may imagine. In the mean time, Mademoiselle Knesebeck was several times cross-examined, which continued after the departure of my daughter, who from the first was always kept in confinement.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

But pray what has been done by your brother-in-law and his consort, for the benefit of your daughter?

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

My daughter, before her last interview with her children, bade adieu to the Elector and his consort, and received their admonition to calm herself, to reflect in retirement on what had occurred, and allow the affair to terminate in mutual contentment. Both expressed their determination to use every exertion to arrange all differences amicably, and with this object in view to send Count Platen to her, soon after her arrival at Ahlden. But what were this man's intentions, when exceeding his commission, I do not know; but he did not attain the desired end, and certainly contributed to the reverse.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

But pray have you more complete information from your daughter on this point?

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Nothing but what is very imperfect. Platen, among other things, asked her whether she had lived in too close an intimacy with Konigsmark, and whether she intended to disgrace the illustrious family, by flying from Hanover. The last question my daughter answered—that as her father had not granted her permission to live with him or me, she had intended travelling to Wolfenbüttel, to find protection there, and to withdraw herself from the Crown Prince. But when Platen repeated the other question concerning Königsmark, she affirmed her innocence in the strongest terms, calling it a scandalous defamation, and therefore desired, as a proof of her having declared the truth, that the holy sacrament should be administered to her.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

This must have been done, and I gladly thus early congratulate you on this excellent idea of your daughter to establish her innocence.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Platen, after irritating her in the manner I have mentioned, and after replying that he was not authorised to administer the sacrament, asked her whether she intended reconciling herself again with the Crown Prince—which of course, in the excited state of her mind, she denied. On making the Elector acquainted with this, his highness and his consort greatly rejoiced at my daughter's innocence; but when it was communicated to the Countess Platen, she discovered it was advisable to relate it to the Duke of Zelle, because it could be made to appear that in this manner the most holy rites of our religion would be brought into contempt, for she had obtained evidence respecting the state of the Princess's health, that confirmed her previous information. The Countess then wrote a letter to this effect to Bernstorf, in order to prepare the Duke and to request his opinion. Though every exertion was made to procure a different result, the answer of my dear George was in his daughter's favour, he affirming that in his country the consolations of religion could not be refused to the greatest criminals, and consequently the Princess was to receive the sacrament. This was

done on an altar erected for the purpose in her apartment, and after a long admonition had been given to her, in the presence of the Countess Platen, Bernstorf, and others, she partook of the Holy Sacrament, in the deepest humility.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

By this the justification of your daughter was rendered complete—allow me again to repeat my sincere congratulations.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Accept my best thanks. When the ceremony was concluded, my daughter, in the presence of all who had been sent as witnesses to Ahlden, turning to Count Platen, requested him to solicit his wife also, to confirm her assertion of her innocence, by receiving the sacrament.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

This was admirably well done! This was excellent—and it was brought forward at the most advantageous moment.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

In this way her innocence was made manifest before the world, and Platen so taken by surprise he could not say a word. No one present could help looking upon my daughter as an innocent and suffer-

ing Princess. But my excellent George, who could not forget the expressions applied to him in his daughter's letters, because, by the advice of the Countess Platen, they were continually repeated to him by her husband and Bernstorf, whenever an opportunity favourable to her designs presented itself, remained in a constant rage against her, principally in consequence of Bernstorf's hints; and all my exertions for my daughter's benefit were in vain.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

The proceedings of the Countess Platen with the Elector, and those of Mademoiselle Schulenburg with the Crown Prince, are sufficiently known; as also that the two women have invariably endeavoured to act in opposition to the welfare of the Princess; nevertheless, I have been informed that her husband, as well as her parents, always considered her to be innocent.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

For this reason, therefore, the Elector determined, soon after the performance of the ceremony I have mentioned, if his daughter-in-law would but humbly acknowledge having offended her husband, and promise to live in peace with

him for the future, that all should be forgotten, and that she should be replaced in her former position. When my daughter heard of it, she wrote to me that as regarded the very kind offer of her father-in-law, she really wavered in her previous resolution, and requested the advice of one of her father's ministers. Bernstorf, who had besides this other affairs to transact with my daughter, proceeded to her on both errands soon afterwards.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

But why was he, who was inclined only to promote the designs of both the Platens, sent thither? He certainly would not have advised her to a reconciliation, because, if it had been effected he might, in his turn, be made to suffer for having acted from the commencement against the interests of your daughter.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Bernstorf, therefore, hung back, when my daughter asked his advice respecting this proposal, and hesitated to give an immediate reply. But when she pressed for a decisive answer as to his advice on this point, he observed, that should she consent, she must humble herself and acknow-

ledge her guilt, if not in her heart, certainly before the world; and, consequently, he said, it seemed better to persist in her intention to remain separated from her husband, because he believed her father would allow her to live in his territories, and would not like that she, apparently guilty, should live under the influence of her husband. This coinciding with the schemes of the Platens, and their representations, caused my daughter to repeat the decision already mentioned, "never henceforth to live with the Crown Prince, but to end her days in privacy;" to which she added, that "if guilty, she did not deserve to live with the Prince, and if innocent, she could not wish to live any longer with him, but she hoped she might see her children, and be allowed to end her days in content and tranquillity."

In consequence of this, her father and her uncle determined that she might live separated from the Crown Prince, but should not come near her parents. Subsequently, the Countess Platen made use of this determination of my daughter to show, what she called her stubborn, whimsical, quarrelsome, impudent character, and as far as possible, to vilify her conduct. In the same way, but in

a milder manner, Mademoiselle Schulenburg had represented the affair to the Crown Prince, and both women tried all in their power to prevent a reconciliation. But these were not the only means employed, for Bernstorf and Count Platen did everything they could think of to induce the Duke to adhere to his previously expressed determination to banish his daughter. By such proceedings, particularly by repeating to my George the offensive expressions in his daughter's notes, he was made to declare that he would never behold his daughter again, and to resolve that she should remain for ever in prison. In the mean time the Elector had been misled into believing this, and as the best means of avoiding a separation of his and his brother's territories, to promise that he intended keeping her always in a princely manner, and that after her father's death, she should be permitted to end her days with me. Then my husband was persuaded to take an oath, that should the conditions promised by his brother be kept, he would adhere unalterably to his determination never to pardon his daughter or see her again.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

Really this is almost incredible.

Enter DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

You have had, it seems, a very long and animated discourse. I regret, my dear cousin, to learn that you so soon and so suddenly design leaving us. I was in hopes of having your company some days longer, on this most lamentable visitation I have experienced in my old age. But I hope you will soon come to see us again.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

Assuredly I shall always side with my old friend, and hope to visit you in a short time for a longer period.

THE ECCLESIASTICAL COURT.

ZELLE, 1695.

Duchess Eleonore.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

M. THIES* must have momentous business or some important affairs to transact with the Duke, because otherwise he would have been here before this. I feel, however, I must confess, particularly impatient in this affair, as, since the Consistorial Court have finished their labours, and the whole affair in which my daughter is concerned is brought to a close, I am most desirous of receiving a short account of everything that has been done in this business.

* M. Thies acted as legal adviser to the Princess.

Enter THIES.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

I am glad to see you; you have certainly been receiving your instructions from the Duke.

THIES.

I have, and am very happy to act in accordance with them. His highness also put some questions relating to the now separated Princess, henceforth to be called the Duchess of Ahlden.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Now that the affair is concluded, I understand you are permitted to inform me of all circumstances concerning it, with which, most probably, no one is better acquainted than yourself. I believe some part of the transactions has been kept from my knowledge.

THIES.

At the command of your highness, I dare say I shall be enabled to tell you everything; but perhaps you will not require to look over the papers relating to the subject, as I am able to explain their contents.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

No; I only wish, in the first instance, to be made acquainted with all the transactions generally, and consecutively; moreover, I desire parti-

cularly to be informed the reason why the first answer of the Princess was not forwarded to the ecclesiastical court established to receive it.

THIES.

I was commanded to present the first answer of the Princess, dated 26th September, in Hanover, to the Vice-Chancellor Hugo, who, in the absence of the Elector, was ordered to conduct the proceedings. At the commencement of this letter there was mentioned the entire title of the Princess, and then that of the Crown Prince, as the parties concerned. At this the Vice-Chancellor appeared surprised. Moreover, this document, under the hand of the Princess, stated that, after the complaint of the Prince had been immediately communicated to the Princess, M. Bulow and myself had been sent by her father to learn her highness's answer, and leaving the particulars of the complaint in its place unnoticed, she stated she never intended to live again as the consort of her husband, as also that she wished for nothing more than a separation of marriage, and that I had been commissioned to communicate this letter with the power of attorney to the court.

M. Hugo seemed to have expected a full con-

fession of the guilt implied in the complaint; but Vice-Chancellor Fabricius, of Zelle, who conducted the proceedings during the absence of the Duke here, like myself, did not suppose, or know, that any special or single transaction, or anything in confession of the guilt or in defence of the innocence of the Princess, was to be first stated. This declaration of the Princess was here considered sufficient, in order not to again molest the Princess, which might produce unexpected consequences. This was particularly the opinion of the Grand Marshal of the court, M. Bulow, because he pretended she might be irritated by the law proceedings.

However, Vice-Chancellor Hugo said at Hanover, that the matrimonial court would not find the declaration sufficient, and therefore he proposed another letter, which he had composed, mentioning, that if the Princess would send it, she would most likely not be troubled on that account any further; besides he should inform the court that a formal visit from its officers was not to be wished by the Princess. Considering this, and as the first letter did not vary particularly from the one proposed by M. Hugo, and as the contents

had been agreed to by the Duke during a visit of the Elector to his highness at Zelle, and also by the latter—a proposition was made to send this document to the Princess, and that a copy should be forwarded to the Court. Your highness most probably knows its contents.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Consequently the full title of my daughter and her husband only being omitted, you mean the rest contained the same particulars as the first communication. You travelled with the proposed letter on the 24th of October, to my daughter at Lauenau, or has that arrangement been postponed?

THIES.

I arrived on that day at Lauenau, after M. Bulow had desired me to induce the Princess to consent to this writing, in order to prevent a formal visit of the ecclesiastical court. M. von Wense, acting as Vice-Chamberlain, immediately conducted me to the Princess. This proposed communication, though it did not contain the full title, yet as it commenced with the words, "We have," appeared to surprise the Princess; particularly, as when she was alluded to, she invariably was indi-

cated by the word "We,"—nevertheless she sanctioned the document, after a brief representation of the circumstances, in order, as she said, the sooner to finish the affair.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

How did you find my daughter behaving during your stay there?

THIES.

Completely as becomes a Princess of so distinguished a family.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Well—continue, if you please.

THIES.

I handed this writing, with my power of attorney, into the court, on the 1st of November. But the Elector and his illustrious consort still desiring to produce a reconciliation, the court was informed of it, and subsequently discovered that the document just mentioned was not sufficiently explicit. Your highness must know that the President von Busche and the Superintendent Molan were commissioned to travel for this purpose to the Princess at Lauenau. They arrived there on the 30th of November, and, as in my case, were immediately introduced to the Princess.

The relation made by these gentlemen can scarcely be unknown to your highness.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

I only know it imperfectly—therefore tell me whatever you recollect of it?

THIES.

The Privy-councillor and President von Busche first explained the cause of their visit, and then stated that the matrimonial court had been greatly surprised by the contents of the communication that had been laid before it, particularly as it averred that her highness would not live any longer with her husband, for which no reason had been given. But she must know well what disadvantage to her cause might be produced by an intention so opposite, what grief she would cause her parents, and how much she would injure her reputation; and, on the other side, how she could at once retain her princely rank, provided she returned to her husband—as regards which, on sufficient and mature reflection, it was greatly to be recommended, particularly as it must at the same time be considered to be commanded by religion.

On making a sign to M. Molan, he commenced

representing the duties of matrimony—how firmly every one was bound by them—that married people could not separate till it was the pleasure of the Almighty to divide them; but should this be done exclusively of their own dispositions, it would cause the displeasure of the Lord, which has been stated in the Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, vii. 10. There the perilous way every one would be in who should act in opposition to it, might easily be deduced. On this the Princess remarked that these were very good reasons, but she intended living a life of peace; and though she might be the greater sufferer, she would adhere to her opinion, which would be most for the benefit of her soul. Since she had loved the world too much, and now that Providence had led her away from it, and she found the change salutary, she had resolved, though it would be in some respects a severe punishment, not to return to the Crown Prince.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

The more I hear of this affair, the more incomprehensible seems the singular resolution of my daughter; because, if everything had been represented to her, she would have considered her situation, or at least might have asked time for so doing.

THIES.

The Superintendent remarked that her highness might be taking a premature resolution: but the Princess replied, "No, it had long since been forced from her; it had been sufficiently considered, and consequently she might well form such a resolution." The Superintendent, in continuation, said, "As regards this, it is open to doubt, because the more he became acquainted with the whole affair, the more he was confirmed in his opinion: and undoubtedly the subject was an important one. Moreover, if some unjust reflections had arisen, they might be corrected. The subject in question might possibly not have been properly considered, because marriage was not, as in any other contract, the work of man, but of the Almighty, and His commands were to be obeyed; for each party would be obliged to appear before him as the judge of their actions, and answer for every one of them. Besides, the duties of a mother being considered, she should remember how much the Prince and the Princess would miss her; and that there must also be taken into consideration the consequences of such a separation, as the culpable party would not be permitted to marry, though

this privilege would be allowed to the innocent. The Princess, too, being still young, might live for many years in grandeur, if she would comply with the wishes of the court and the commands of the Almighty, but in other respects subject herself to strict control. The matter ought to be reconsidered with fervent prayer, and in the presence of a clergyman."

Then the Superintendent remarked, that a subject of such importance could not be too much considered, and that no one ought to insist upon an opinion by which the individual might be hurried blindfold into misery. It would still be time, and it would be praiseworthy, to give up a resolution once taken, were it clearly perceptible that some part of it was in direct opposition to the will of the Creator. And in this case it was most requisite not to adhere obstinately to one's own opinion, in the belief that the favour of Providence could not be forfeited, because such thoughts were only deceits of the flesh, which for our benefit ought never to be allowed to run on and grow too powerful.

But all this, and whatever else passed in conversation, and the admonitions directed both to her

heart and mind, were not able to change the opinion of the Princess. She remained stedfast in her resolution, because, as she averred, she could better serve the Almighty by remaining alone. Perceiving that the determination of the Princess was not to be altered, we three came away.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

And after this the affair soon ended?

THIES.

A report of the conversation was communicated to the solicitor of the Crown Prince on the 1st of December. Two days later a document was given into court from that side, which expressed regret for the present state of things, but also stated that the Crown Prince, having left no means untried to dispose the Princess more favourably, without any effect, he requested that the separation of marriage should be completed. I was then desired by the Court, after the contents of this communication should be made known to the Princess, to send in a final answer. But instead of this I was ordered to hand to the Court a written declaration from the Princess, persisting in her opinion, and told that I was not to enter into any further discussion.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

I now see it was impossible for you to have done more than you have for my daughter's benefit, for she was determined on carrying her point. But the Matrimonial Court having, on the 28th of December, pronounced the sentence which declared the separation of marriage, with permission to the Crown Prince to marry again, but not to the Princess, she can only attribute her fate to herself.

THIES.

Being, however, still uncertain as regards the intentions of the Princess, and whether she would bow to this decision,—because after some time she might change her mind, which might be injurious to me, or in respect to which it might appear as if I had not done everything in my power to effect a reconciliation with the Crown Prince,—I solicited, after the sentence had, on the 31st of December, 1694, been formally made known to the Princess, to be made acquainted with what I had farther to do, as also if I had acted to her satisfaction, and begged that a certificate to this effect might be given me. Here it is. Allow me to read it.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

With pleasure.

THIES (*reading*).

"As we have now, after having been made acquainted with the sentence, considered it, and resolved to leave it as determined, our solicitor must act accordingly, and is not to act nor proceed any farther in this matter. For the rest, we hereby declare that we are gratefully content with the conduct of our aforesaid Solicitor of the Court, Thies, and that by this we free him from all responsibility regarding these transactions.

"Lauenau, December 31st, 1694.

(Signed) "SOPHIA DOROTHEA."

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

I feel greatly obliged to you for your brief, and to me most interesting narration, which to a considerable extent will calm my mind in respect to this, to me, lamentable affair.

[*Exit Thies.*

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Oh, what is now to become of my dear daughter? Immediately after the sentence was made known to her, she returned to Ahlden, and surely

there she will not be better than at Lauenau. Had she listened to the well-meant advice she received from several persons, particularly from M. Molan, how many mournful hours would she have saved her father and me, and how many days of solitude avoided for herself!

Enter DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

You have, I suppose, now learnt from Thies the whole of Sophy's lamentable case. This business is now entirely concluded, and with it, I hope, all improper remarks and conclusions on the subject. I, for one, will not hear anything more from her, since she abused my kindness by ridiculing my actions, and also because she exhibits herself beyond all conception stubborn and obdurate, in refusing the good advice to show some disposition to reconciliation.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Time will show her what she ought to have done,—even if she does not as yet regret her conduct, she must do so shortly. But I am sorry I was not permitted to see her in her mournful situation, for she certainly would have followed the advice of her mother.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

But you have kept up an almost constant correspondence with her, and I am certain must have advised and admonished her to do her duty, and not make me so wretched in my old age.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

I am sure I tried all in my power to effect a reconciliation, but when I consider her situation at your brother's court, and what she there suffered from the treatment to which she was subjected, I can scarcely doubt she will live more quietly and comfortably in her solitude than she could have done had she returned to the Crown Prince.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Where she lives cannot be called a solitude. She is allowed a governor, a gentleman in waiting, sometimes two, on other occasions three ladies in attendance; she occasionally invites the civil and military officers of Ahlden, as well as the clergyman, and has also at times persons from different places to visit her.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

As she is permitted to see several persons, I shall request that this privilege be allowed me.

DUKE GEORGE WILLIAM.

This is impossible. I should not permit it in opposition to my brother and his son, for it would only irritate them against me, and who knows what disagreeable things you might bring upon yourself by it, after my death.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Then I will at once renounce it.

AN IMPRISONED PRINCESS.

Ahlden, 1695.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Having returned here, and passed the first quiet night, I find myself isolated from all true friends, whilst surrounded by spies to watch my conduct, and a guard to prevent me from absconding. This care, however, is unnecessary. But having here the administration of the Ahlden territory, Rethem and Walsrode, and of the Custom House stations along the Weser and Aller, I hope by these affairs, the arrangement of my household, and the business connected with them, and with a proper attention to the claims of charity, to fill up my leisure hours. In the first place'

I intend to write instructions for my head cook and butler, to arrange everything in the household in the manner most agreeable to me, and for the better regulation of my affairs. When all has been put in order, I dare say I may hope to live a little more quietly, and be enabled to take more heed of spiritual things for the benefit of my soul, than I could at a court full of intrigues and cabals, in a worldly tumult, where the majority desire only to gratify their vanity and ambition.

But I grieve at being separated from my dear children, with whom I am permitted only to correspond; and, though cut off from every friend, I feel the want of a confidant more than ever. If I could only behold poor Mademoiselle Knesebeck! What can have been her fate? How miserable, though as innocent as myself, she must be, and only for having been my friend! How happy should I be if I could assist her, or at least release her from prison; and to this effect I shall write to the Elector.

But here alone, at the window which overlooks the crooked street of the village, I certainly shall not attain my object. I therefore do

not intend to look out and admire the industrious inhabitants any longer; but only in my leisure hours shall I be able to spare time to amuse myself with the labours of the busy farmers of this village. Now I shall retire into my cabinet; in the first place attend to Mademoiselle Knesebeck's business, and then to everything connected with the arrangement of the housekeeping and household affairs

ESCAPE OF MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

WOLFENBUTTEL, 1695.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK (*entering.*)

AFTER all, then, they have succeeded in saving Mademoiselle Knesebeck, for whom I have been very anxious, because I had ceased to hear anything of her for so unreasonable a time.

Enter MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

I heartily congratulate you on your happy arrival, as the long time that has elapsed since the day you were sent for, made me apprehensive of being disappointed in my intentions, as regards

which you owe the greatest obligations to the Duchess of Zelle.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

I may have detained for some days the gentleman sent for me, at Scharzfels; besides, he could not immediately commence repairing the slating over my rooms, though it was much required; previously to which it was impossible to hand me the note containing the necessary information. And when I first discovered a paper suspended before my window, and heard a faint knocking, I was uncertain what to think, and in some doubt whether it had been done to discover if I entertained any intentions of escaping.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

Your imprisonment at Scharzfels was most probably very severe and annoying.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

If I was permitted in the day time to walk about the old castle, and to gaze from its high walls or from my window upon the trees of the Harz forest, as soon as it began to grow dark, I was locked up in my room. I could have my dinners only from the meals of the garrison, and on one occasion, being taken ill, a barber, prac-

tising the art of a physician, ordered me some wine, but instead I obtained only the most common gin mixed with water, and coloured with blackberry juice.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

Well, I hope you will stay here, and recover your health before you think of leaving. Your escape was, I dare say, attended with danger.

MADEMOISELLE KNESEBECK.

When I let down my tackle from the window of my room into the castle ditch, I almost doubted that I should be so fortunate as to escape, and had I not been tied to the sling in which I sat, and by the rope by which I descended into the *fossé*, I certainly should have become giddy and dropped out. But after the gentleman who assisted me in my escape had also let himself down by the same means, my courage and strength were renewed, and we proceeded without interruption, though with some difficulty, out of the ditch, and undisturbed through the neighbouring forest, where I was only in fear of the wolves, which were heard during the darkness of the night, until we arrived where horses were in readiness for us, and by which we proceeded with the utmost speed, until secure from recapture.

DUKE ANTONY ULRICK.

Now go and rest yourself, in order that you may afterwards tell me all the transactions relating to the now separated Princess, that occurred during your residence in Hanover.

THE IMPRISONMENT.

AHLDEN, 1706.

*Princess Sophia Dorothea and Madame Von Ilten.**

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

MY melancholy thoughts almost destroy me since my father left this world. In him I lost my sole comfort, my only hope, my earthly happiness, as far as relates to my prospect of deliverance from my prison, after having been confined nearly twelve years. The firm belief I have in the justice of Providence and the favour of an Omnipotent Power is my sole consolation, the

* One of the ladies in attendance on the Princess Sophia Dorothea at Ahlden.

only hope and stay of my unhappy life, and with this alone I must remain content. But my poor, my dear, my beloved children, I shall perhaps never see again: this has been determined.

MADAME VON ILTEN.

Comfort yourself, honoured lady, with what is consolatory in your fate. Remember that you have infinitely more comforts and advantages than thousands or rather millions of other individuals, who can scarcely provide for their daily bread.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Of what use are such advantages and comforts, I having been kept here so strictly guarded for so many years, that no step I take escapes the attention of my guards and spies. Remember also that whatever I do or say is, if possible, applied to my disadvantage; and that thus, separated as I am from all my friends, I cannot but feel how intolerable is my situation. Ought I not to prefer being worse off with the enjoyment of freedom?

MADAME VON ILTEN.

But remember, does not your highness sometimes receive letters, occasionally also accompanied by presents, that afford you great gratifi-

cation, and show you the love of your Prince and Princess?

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

It is true my dear children, as far as they are permitted, do all they can to comfort me in my solitude, and make me forget my confinement; but consider that, while thus imprisoned, I am debarred from personal converse with them, from listening to their wishes and intentions, and from many inexpressible things which I can only enjoy in their presence.

MADAME VON ILTEN.

But your highness has enjoyed the great satisfaction of hearing of the marriage of your Prince during the past year to the daughter of the Margrave of Anspach, and that of your Princess to the Crown Prince of Prussia, who, since his father has been proclaimed King, must in due time be raised to the same exalted station. There are also remarkably excellent prospects for your Prince, who will most likely some day be King of Great Britain; and as regards this, you cannot but be pleased to agree with me that you are possessed of enviable advantages over other ladies, and even over many other princesses.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

I really gratefully acknowledge that Providence has remarkably favoured my children, and appears to have taken them under its protection, in allowing them to obtain such an elevated position in the world, by which they may be enabled to assist so many persons. But the prospect of my son inheriting the English throne appears still to be very distant.

MADAME VON ILTEN.

The contrary is generally believed, on account of the assistance which the late Elector Ernest Augustus rendered to the Prince of Orange at the battle of Fleurus in 1690, in the battle gained near Steenkirk in 1691, as well as in 1693, in the Low Countries and near Neerwesiden, as also near Namur in 1697, and in the following year, when the peace of Ryswick was concluded: the Crown Prince too has particularly distinguished himself; besides which, King William of England, when Duke George visited him at the Hague, with the Elector and his consort, acknowledged his prospect of the throne. In consequence of which, undoubtedly something will be done. But when, about six

years ago, on the 10th of August, the Duke of Gloucester died, and King William before his death endeavoured to settle the succession on his aunt the Electress Sophia and her heirs, in accordance with the rights of primogeniture, on the 3rd of March, 1701, the Act of Succession, and on the 22nd of March, 1702, the Act of Security were passed, when the hopes that Prince George Augustus, your highness's son, would inherit the British throne, as the Catholic line were excluded, appeared to be almost realised. In addition to the services already named, there must be mentioned the assistance given at the fight near Schellenberg, and during the battle of Hochsted in 1704, and that the present Elector, since he inherited the dignity from his father in 1698, has always been ready to come forward for the English interest. It must, therefore, undoubtedly be acknowledged that the prospects of Prince George Augustus, as well as those of the Princess Sophia Dorothea—both children of your highness—cannot but be considered exceedingly brilliant.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Certainly, according to your historical summary

of some remarkable facts, it seems that in consequence of the services rendered, and the act of the Parliament of England, passed in 1701, it is probable your assertion may be true. But remember that Queen Anne's husband is still alive, and therefore she may have heirs.

MADAME VON ILTEN.

This may be, but since the numerous children to which she has given birth have all died, I think there is little chance of her leaving an heir to the English crown; but independently of this, the Crown Prince George Augustus, your highness's son, will become sovereign of extensive possessions on the continent. Not to mention the Electorate of Hanover, which he will inherit on the death of his father, he will become the sovereign of Lauenburg after the stipulated sum in gold has been paid to the Elector of Saxony; moreover, by the treaty of 1703, between the father of your highness and Duke Antony Ulrick, he will inherit the Lüneburg country, which already forms a portion of the possessions of the Elector. There are also other provinces,—for instance, those of Bremen and Verden he may likewise, in all probability, inherit, when the claims of Denmark and Sweden

concerning them have been settled. As the sovereign of such important and extensive countries, your highness's prince will become, if not the most powerful, at least one of the most powerful monarchs in Europe, and certainly possess the greatest naval force since the reign of Queen Elizabeth, which during the reign of the present Queen of England has displayed its pre-eminence by taking Gibraltar, and destroying the Spanish fleet in Vigo.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

I must acknowledge you know how to record many facts that afford me consolation in the bitterness of my fate, the most bitter portion of which is not being permitted to converse personally with my children. Certainly it seems, from their excellent prospects, that they are not likely to pass their lives in as miserable a manner as their mother. In this, assuredly, as well as in the conviction that my sufferings are not so great as those of many others, but chiefly from the consolation which religion affords, I find my principal support in all the afflictions that embitter my existence.

MADAME VON ILTEN.

In addition, there is to be considered the in-

telligence sent by the kind mother of your highness, together with her visits, which have already amounted to a considerable number, here at Ahlden, where they will be repeated still more frequently, as well as the advantages they produce.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

You certainly explain all the advantages of my situation, for which I feel obliged to you, but all my sorrows and my numerous restrictions you pass unnoticed; as, for instance, that I am not permitted to go to church, nor allowed to walk on the ramparts of the castle; that I dare not leave this place without a guard; and numerous other aggravating things. These are settled regulations, which, by being strictly adhered to, make my situation very tiresome, and whilst they exist, all the comforts of life granted me fail to alleviate my earthly destiny. Besides, I do not comprehend why I am confined here, or why I am watched so strictly, since nothing is mentioned in the agreement of separation of marriage, nor in the declaration of the sentence, which in the most distant way can be made to relate to it.

MADAME VON ILTEN.

It seems rather to have been so arranged out of care for your highness's health, and to prevent the damp atmosphere of the church, or the humidity of the grass, or any indisposition likely to arise during a carriage ride, that might be injurious,—all of which it is necessary your highness should avoid.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Well: I see the equipage of my mother arriving. We will receive her at the staircase.

[*Exit Madame von Ilten.*

Enter DUCHESS ELEONORE.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

My dear daughter, how glad I am to see you! I hope you do not want for anything, and take care to preserve your health. Things which we cannot alter we must endure as well as we can, and whatever happens should be turned to the best use to which we can apply it.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

My dear mother, how rejoiced I am to behold you again looking in such excellent health, though you have passed your sixty-seventh birth-day; and

in that respect you will not find any one to equal you. You have the calm and comfortable look of a woman of forty.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Thank heaven, I find myself tolerably well after the great and bitter loss of your father, which at first seemed totally to destroy me, and which made me feel so unhappy I even wished for death: but remembering that I might do something for you in your solitude, and sometimes afford you my society, I discovered that it would be better to live, and consequently I have taken great care of myself, and consoled myself as much as possible in my lonely and lamentable situation. I find also, that by care and attention, I have again nearly recovered my strength.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

You promised in your letters to me to tell me something respecting the death of the Countess Platen. Excuse me if I ask you to do so.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Since her death, I have been informed of wonderful things respecting her and her sister, who, however, appears still to be in high favour. You may, perhaps, remember how anxious the

Countess was to obtain precise information respecting the tales about her, which Königsmark was reported to have told at Dresden, after a dinner party.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Yes; I remember it very well, but I should like to know, has anything transpired respecting her conduct in relation to Königsmark's disappearance?

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Yes; one of the halberdiers who was present at his arrest and attack on the evening he quitted you, opposed the Count more determinedly than any of his comrades, in order to secure him, but was severely wounded. His name was Busman —he died a short time before the Countess Platen. He happened to have on his death-bed the same clergyman that the Countess had called in. Busman acknowledged to him, before his death, that he could not die in peace until he had confessed a heavy sin which was pressing on his conscience. He then declared to the clergyman how he, with three others, had been placed in the hall next to the Saloon of Knights, and the passage leading to the other parts of the palace

at Hanover—how these four had been ordered to hide themselves behind the large chimney there, and had been regaled with some liquor to encourage them, whilst the Countess gave them their instructions. On the appearance of Königsmark, it appears she gave the signal to secure him, but after drawing his sword he defended himself, was fiercely attacked by his assailants, his cheek and chin were severely wounded by Busman, and he received several wounds, in return inflicting some also on Busman and another of his assailants. After he had been brought into the presence of the Countess, and she, to all appearance, began tying up his hurts, on perceiving his bloody face she staggered, and, as if by accident, trod with her foot on his face, upon his uttering some offensive words. This prevented his continuing his remarks, but from the moment he was first attacked, until he had several times fainted, he repeatedly declared your innocence.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Then his last words were true: nevertheless I, as well as Mademoiselle Knesebeck, have been cross-examined and imprisoned. But pray excuse this interruption.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

The Countess Platen then fetched the Elector, who appeared exceedingly angry; he, however, was somewhat calmed by the testimony of the halberdiers, and the assertions of the Countess. He then ordered the body to be secretly buried, but, by the desire of the Countess, after searching Königsmark's pockets, in which she found some letters, the body was cast into a secret hole, with quick-lime thrown over it, and the place walled up. Moreover, every one present was threatened with the severest punishment if he failed in keeping the transaction secret, consequently nothing respecting it was suffered to transpire, although so many and such repeated inquiries were made on the subject.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

But, my dear mother, who told you all this?

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

M. Cramer, the clergyman present at the decease of Busman and the Countess Platen; but only recently, since her death, I was made acquainted with these circumstances. The Countess having been informed of the halberdier's confession, and being questioned by M. Cramer respect-

ing it, did not answer, but merely evinced her surprise a little before she died. M. Cramer has, on the margin of a copy of the character of the Countess, attached to her funeral sermon, written some remarkable observations. He showed me this copy, but keeps it just for a short time to make it complete, and then he is to send it to me.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Pray, if you have perused this composition, when you visit me again, bring it to me. It must certainly also contain something relating to the four last years of the government of the Elector Ernest Augustus, because, as I have been informed, if the Countess did not fall in her sovereign's estimation, she sometimes became very melancholy, until revived by some gracious words, which it is said had quite an electric effect. Moreover, during the two years in which she survived his death, I should also be glad to know if, as regards her, there happened anything particular that may throw light on her conduct to me.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Notwithstanding all inquiries, I have not been informed of anything particularly relating to it,

but what I have mentioned: every transaction in her house having been kept a profound secret. The grand festivities she was so fond of were never celebrated after the demise of the Elector, and she passed the last two years of her life very religiously. This her clergyman also told me. At court, during this interval, she appeared very rarely indeed.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

How, then, is her husband?

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

He has got very old, and rather infirm, but has not quite withdrawn from public affairs. He lives very quietly, and appears at court only on high festival days.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

What situation does Bernstorf at present occupy under his new master? How is he liked? Has he, of late years, been as unceasingly busy to show himself useful, as well to the late Elector as to the present, in order to retain his situation, and to obtain other advantages towards realizing his favourite project respecting the enlargement of his Gartow estate?

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

I am sorry to say that, in every affair in which he supposed or knew that I might be involved, he has always acted to my disadvantage.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Was there then no possibility of lessening his influence over my father, who always so much wished to do everything in his power for your benefit?

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

I regret to say, that there was none. Bernstorf's opinion was always preferred. Oh! that he had not gone to you, or you had not asked his advice when the Elector, in 1694, before the separation of marriage, proposed a reconciliation to you if you would regret your precipitancy. Then all was to have been forgotten.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

That is now too late, and with the then Crown Prince I could never have lived in peace, because, while considering the proposal that was made to me, before Bernstorf's arrival, with respect to the fate of my children, which I was inclined to accept at the hands of my father-in-law, and being favourably disposed towards it, I dreamed

I had a conversation with the Crown Prince in his apartment, after which Mademoiselle Knesebeck led me to mine, and I fancied in my dream he had come to me, and had again seized me by the throat to strangle me. This dream caused me at once to adopt Bernstorf's advice, but I feel assured that he, as well as Platen, never could have desired a reconciliation between me and my husband. But pray has Bernstorf since then constantly led my father?

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

I am sorry to say, that, after your marriage, but particularly since he and his sworn coadjutor Platen, had explained your notes to Königsmark, to your father, and since the former gave his advice in your affairs, his influence rose constantly, in so far as to the last to hold possession of the complete confidence of my dear George. There will never be a better Prince, or one more inclined to advance the happiness and the welfare of his subjects. As regards which, I am satisfied no one can be a better judge than myself, who have lived with him for forty years. I never shall forget him.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Really I perceive that the hardships he made me endure were for the most part caused by his determination of purpose. This, however, may be desirable in a gentleman, and particularly so in a sovereign.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

'Moreover, my dear George, whenever he could be convinced, before he had fully determined, might be led, by which I am sorry to say Bernstorf knew too well how to profit. Even when, in 1703, my late husband's oldest intimate friend, Duke Antony Ulrick, had entered into some negociations with France, Bernstorf knew how to represent this to the imperial court, as if the Duke of Wolfenbüttel entertained an intention of creating some disturbance opposed to the interests of the empire. This was followed, as you may recollect, by the entrance of the Hanoverian and Lüneburg troops into the Brunswick territory, and Brunswick Wolfenbüttel was surrounded by them; but because the troops of Duke Antony Ulrick had, as was shown, been designed for other purposes, and because some part were immediately dismissed, a letter of your father's friend, who is

now peculiarly mine, caused the troops to be immediately withdrawn. The old friendly union was renewed, and after the settlement with Saxony of the Lauenburg business, in 1698, Duke Antony Ulrick was satisfied in 1703; after which the treaty was concluded that the Lüneburg territory was after your father's death to be united with the Hanoverian.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Consequently, since that time, no misunderstanding has been produced between my father and his friend.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

None whatever. On the contrary, their friendship has become more firmly established.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

You may also inform me of the matters settled on the 26th of January last year, and all that transpired. You must remember that I wrote, in hopes of my deliverance, after ten years' imprisonment, and solicited my freedom.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Certainly, I am glad you remind me of it. I showed your letter to my dear George, and handed him the one you had addressed to him, on a day I

found him in good humour, and united my entreaties with yours. But he immediately became very severe, and replied he would mention it to Bernstorf. Then putting forth some argument opposed to your request, he went away, and had, as I have been told, a long conversation with Bernstorf. The result he let me know by telling me, that his most confidential counsellor, on his mentioning your solicitation, reminded him of the contemptuous expressions that had been employed by you to signify him, and his oath with reference to them never to see you again, and never to release you from prison. And because you had not reconciled yourself with the Elector George Lewis, he could not break his oath, which he had given on that condition.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Consequently there remains for me no hope of my ever seeing my dear children again.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

All that I could persuade your father to do, was to make a codicil to his last will, allowing me to execute a grant of all my property to you after my death.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

But I have never been made acquainted with the contents of either codicil or will.

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

You know that the agreement of your father with your separated husband, after the latter had obtained the government of the Hanoverian territory, contains nothing more than the Duke's assurance to fulfil those earlier settlements in which you were concerned with your late father-in-law; but your father, in accordance with the advice of myself and Duke Antony Ulrick, saw the advantage of having another agreement for your security carefully drawn up. In consequence of which, the addition to your father's last will contains only the following provision: "as regards the separated consort of the Elector George Lewis, it is determined that things should remain as fixed in the marriage settlement, particularly with respect to Wilhelmsburg, in which no change has been made in the treaties of 1694: and no change is to be made." Some legacies have also been bequeathed, and the rest of his property is to remain to his heirs, in particular to yourself, with which settlement you are to be satisfied, as well as with the arrangements made in 1694 and 1698.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

And pray what is stated in your bequest?

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Of this I have brought you a transcript; but I can inform you in a few words of its contents. Some legacies have been bequeathed to servants who always served me very faithfully and honestly. Moreover, I have settled on you the free enjoyment of a capital of sixty thousand thalers, which is on interest in the banks at Amsterdam in fifty-two loans. Of this sum you may make whatever use you please. In addition, I have given you my estate Olbreuse in Poitou, my house at Wienhausen, with all my jewels, furniture, plate, and ornaments, as also an income of three thousand thalers put out at interest at Hitzacker; but one half of the sum is to remain for each of your children; and if your son should die, your daughter is to inherit the whole. You are also to have an annuity from England of three thousand thalers, and in order that you may keep up a connexion with your daughter, you are to send her one half of it annually, and the whole is to be inherited by her at your decease.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Allow me, my dear mother, to return you my

best thanks for your frequent exertions and great care that I should be constantly connected in matters of business with my daughter, even when any other correspondence might be exceedingly difficult. But now I should also wish to know why my father last year, after you gave me hopes that he would come here, and since I have endured twelve years' imprisonment, never approached me. What prevented his seeing me before his demise, that we might be reconciled, and I might enjoy the happiness of conversing with him?

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

Your father, as I mentioned, in accordance with my representations, resolved to come and see you; but Bernstorf, constantly acting in the interest of the Hanoverian court, continued to remind him of the remarks in your notes and his oath, and said that, as you had not as yet done anything towards a reconciliation, in not asking the pardon of your separated husband, it was uncertain how your father's visit to you might be taken, and what influence it might exert over you after your father's death; and that therefore there existed many reasons for his postponing such intentions. After prolonged debates on this point

with your father, because he had pardoned you and was moreover desirous of seeing you, I still entertained hopes that I should induce him to go; but first I persuaded him to execute the codicil I mentioned, and to permit me to make the bequest. These transactions, and the unfavourable state of the weather for travelling, made the Duke postpone his visit to you for some time. But during his stay with me at Wienhausen, he over-exerted himself in going partridge-shooting; and by remaining so long in the keen air, that a thunder-storm and a heavy shower overtook him, he found himself unwell, and on returning home he got worse. From this arose a violent cold, of which he died some days later.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

I hope, as regards my daughter, a marriage contract has been concluded. What has been settled respecting her?

DUCHESS ELEONORE.

As far as she is concerned, it has been settled that all treaties existing between Hanover and Zelle are to be considered perfectly valid; she is to have a gift of forty thousand thalers, in consideration of which she is to make oath to renounce

all claim of inheritance to every part of the Brunswick-Lüneburg territory as long as male heirs of the electoral house exist; besides which she is to inherit either all or one half of the property you leave.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

I feel much obliged for your information. Excuse me for having detained you so long, after your fatiguing journey, without offering some refreshment, of which I beg you will now partake in another apartment.

THE QUEEN OF PRUSSIA.

BERLIN, 1724.

Queen of Prussia and Ludwig.†*

QUEEN OF PRUSSIA.

WITH respect to politics, I regret to say that I shall not be allowed to write to my dear mother during my stay at Hanover; therefore I have sent for you to make you acquainted with what you are to say to Frederic‡ for his instruction,

* Daughter and namesake of Sophia Dorothea. At the death of her husband's father she became Queen of Prussia.

† An agent engaged by the Queen of Prussia to communicate with her mother. He was a counsellor at Berlin.

‡ A servant of the Queen of Prussia, employed to keep up secret communications with her mother.

to be the more certain of everything he is to do and say, and what he is to deliver for my dear mother to Ludeman.* Of this I have already informed him myself, and I reiterate my wish to have everything delivered and executed exactly as I command, to avoid bringing my mother into greater trouble, or of making her situation worse, and causing her to be subjected to still greater restrictions.

LUDWIG.

Assuredly it is requisite that the greatest caution should be used. The King† even inquired recently after the annuity which is annually received from the Duchess of Ahlden, and expressed his command that this should not give occasion for secret communications, as henceforth the business might be transacted by an agent.

QUEEN OF PRUSSIA.

This should be attended to, and the money certainly might be sent by an agent. But by all means I wish my mother to be assured of my filial duty, love, and respect, and also of my heartfelt desire

* The bailiff at Ahlden, one of the persons engaged in carrying on this correspondence.

† The King of Prussia.

to do everything I can to ameliorate her situation, when it may be in my power. Moreover, I request her to preserve for me her parental love and affectionate inclinations. As a proof of my dutiful love and attachment, I request her to accept the gold watch contained in this parcel, the miniature portraits of myself and husband, together with a small jewel-case and its contents, and a snuff-box.

LUDWIG.

Will a note be sent with them?

QUEEN OF PRUSSIA.

No. I have been desired particularly not to write to her, for the purpose of avoiding any misunderstanding between her and the Court of St. James's. As regards this, my mother is to be informed that I would have written with the greatest pleasure, but partly on her account, partly as regards my own peace, being disinclined to bring her into trouble, and wishing henceforth to be of service to her, I have not ventured to write. Affairs are at present in such confusion that I dare not attempt to communicate with her, because my husband is particularly against my doing so, that I might not do anything likely to prevent

the intended marriage.* Though this is not likely to take place, my husband very much wishes it may. However, on one side so many things are said against it in one way or another, that even the betrothal appears very unlikely. But supposing this affair did not answer the general expectation, the blame would be laid to me, and I should be considered as having been the only obstacle to the success of so politic a match. And therefore I dare not at present do anything in favour of my dear mother, even though she has been nearly thirty years in confinement and strictly watched. As regards this, my husband has also desired that you do not accompany us to Hanover. You might, probably, accidentally do or say something in favour of my mother, or possibly only see somebody, from which inferences might be drawn that might ultimately be disagreeably felt both by my mother and by myself. I therefore wish Frederic to be properly instructed as to the manner in which he ought to execute his message.

* A proposed marriage of the grandchildren of Sophia Dorothea.

LUDWIG.

I shall do my utmost to have Frederic instructed, but this affair requires written directions.

QUEEN OF PRUSSIA.

Such a thing is out of the question ; but you may, for Frederic's better information, give him a written notice, which, however, should only purport, that at present nothing can be done for her here, for fear of making her situation worse, as also that M. de Bar* is not by any means to be sent here again. By his presence and his messages, affairs have become only more involved. Repeat, therefore, that M. de Bar is by all means not to return or show himself here again. Besides, I do not like to be inconvenienced by his presence, because it increases the difficulty of the affair. In consequence of what I have stated it may readily be seen, that is it quite impossible I can at present do anything for my dear mother, as I cannot do it without my husband's consent. Should I hazard anything for her advantage, it

* The Count de Bar, a person very much in the confidence of Sophia Dorothea at this period, but the Queen of Prussia distrusted him.

could not by any possibility be done so secretly as to be kept from his knowledge, and were it to transpire, the restrictions to which my mother is subjected might be increased, as I have said. Should I interfere in her affairs, and should the projected marriage not take place, its failure would be attributed to this interference alone; and however unjust this might be, the King would so consider it, and retaliate on me on that account.

You know his majesty is acquainted with everything, and also what has been sent me by my mother, and in consequence he has desired particularly that nothing of the kind be done in future, or during my presence in Hanover. In order that I may preserve a clear conscience, and be able to inform my husband that his wishes have been respected, I requested she would not send me anything, neither money nor presents, and that nothing might be given to the servants, who likewise have received strict orders not to accept anything whatever.

LUDWIG.

This has already been made known to me, and I have cautioned Frederic on this point.

QUEEN OF PRUSSIA.

But other precautions are also required, in order that even by Frederic's presence at Rehburg no suspicion arise, and therefore it will be as well that Lüdeman, during our stay at Rehburg, should not go thither, or should he be obliged to transact business there, that he strictly avoid all association and connexion with Frederic and the other servants. But again, do not forget to inform Frederic about M. de Bar, that he does not repeat his visit; say I could not bear him. It seems to me that he pays most regard to his own interest, and much less than he ought to the interest of those from whom he received his commission. I could not place any confidence in him, and when he was seen here, I should not have seen nor have spoken to him if Lüdemann had not given him a letter of introduction and recommendation to me. I considered his propositions and designs as fantastical schemes, totally impracticable, though he would, if he could, try to execute them, only to make everything worse.

I hope you perfectly understand me as to whatever you have to say to Frederic concerning my

mother and M. de Bar, in order to prevent the occurrence of anything disagreeable. Let my dear mother be informed that she has only to wait a short time longer, when I shall use my best endeavours, even should it be to my disadvantage, or lead to some misfortune.

LUDWIG.

I shall not forget anything, and shall take care to inform Frederic of all your majesty has stated to me, by presently noting down in a few words every subject upon paper.

QUEEN OF PRUSSIA.

But mind that your writing cannot be applied to your disadvantage, and that it only express in a few words whatever I told you, to avoid any accident that might result from it. Send word to Lüdemann that I was not pleased at his introducing M. de Bar by letter to me, but assure him of my good will: particularly try all you can possibly do that my mother be satisfied of my good intentions, and assured that whatever has been done was done for her benefit. Use every exertion to prevent her from being disturbed in the way I have just mentioned; and also take care all is duly made known to her.

LUDWIG.

Am I to expect any further commands?

QUEEN OF PRUSSIA.

No. Only arrange everything properly, and assure my dear mother of my heartfelt wishes for her welfare, and for the realization of her hopes, for which, in due time, I shall be ready to venture everything.

[*Exit Ludwig.*

QUEEN OF PRUSSIA.

Oh, would it were possible to do anything to satisfy my mother, who certainly has the best intentions, and to whom nothing could be more welcome, after nearly thirty years' confinement, than the enjoyment of her liberty. With the greatest pleasure I would venture everything. I would willingly change my situation with hers, could I only see the possibility of attaining my object. If this ill-timed marriage business had not been proceeding, which certainly cannot succeed, and had this not been an obstacle, this undoubtedly would be a proper opportunity—since she has suffered so hard a lot for so very long a time—to hazard something in her behalf. But at present political transactions render it impossible.

PRISON OCCUPATIONS.

AHLDEN, 1725.

Princess Sophia Dorothea and Lüdemann entering from opposite sides.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

I HAVE been waiting for you a long time to inform you that my daughter will soon arrive in Hanover. Then we are going to endeavour, through M. Ludwig, to make her acquainted with my intentions respecting M. de Bar's assistance.

LÜDEMANN.

As easy as you may imagine it to talk to the Queen's servants, I have reason to believe, from information which has reached me, that there will be great difficulty in finding any secret contri-

vance, by which it would be possible without danger to communicate anything likely to favour your highness's intentions.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Consequently you doubt that I shall be able to obtain anything that can advance my wishes, during the presence of my daughter at Hanover.

LÜDEMANN.

I am forced to do so, because I have received hints respecting it by letters arrived this day, that caution me against running myself into trouble. I was directed to act with the utmost caution, as I might rest assured all my proceedings would be very closely watched. Besides, I have been told that suspicions have arisen of my having executed the commands of your highness without mentioning them to the superintendent here.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Then I desire to see Frederic, or any of the servants, to inquire if they are possessed of my daughter's confidence as regards what has occurred, that I may know what is most advisable to do. But have you brought me the accounts of the Rethem domain under my administration.

LÜDEMANN.

They are not finished, but I have been promised that the deficient portions shall be ready very soon.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

It is very strange that I cannot see the accounts of these domains; and of the sums received and expended, although all expenditure depends on my pleasure. See and get everything completed as soon as possible.

LÜDEMANN.

I shall not fail to bring the accounts as soon as they are made up.

[*Exit Lüdemann.*

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Really, I cannot help thinking that this is a new grief and a new restriction not to allow me to look at the accounts of the income and expenditure of the domain and its appurtenances, given for my administration, and from which partly I am to derive my annual income. What new scheme of the clique is this to restrict me and prevent my disposing of my own funds, because not having spent the entire amount, not even nineteen thousand thalers during the last year, a considerable sum ought to be due to me?

Enter MADAME VON ARENSWALD* *and* LÜDEMANN.

MADAME VON ARENSWALD.

I regret I was unable to wait sooner on your highness, whilst Bailiff Lüdemann was here, but not finding myself well, I kept my bed longer than usual, and when I was summoned I had to arrange a part of my toilet.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Pray do you know what prevents my seeing the accounts of the domains of Ahlden, Rethem, and Walsrode of the past year? There must certainly be a reason for it. M. Lüdemann, I again request to know why this is?

LÜDEMANN.

Some arrears have hitherto remained unpaid, as I have been informed, and it is stated to be impossible that the accounts can be made up without knowing them.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Then I only wish that they may soon be laid before me, that I may be the better acquainted with their administration.

* A lady in attendance on the Princess at Ahlden.

LÜDEMANN.

Have I to await further commands?

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

No: good morning. [*Exit Lüdemann.*

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Pray do you know how long the Queen of Prussia will stay in Hanover?

MADAME VON ARENSWALD.

It is still uncertain; particularly as visits from the highest personages, from Berlin and elsewhere, are expected.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

I thought the farmers' children were to come to-day at this time?

MADAME VON ARENSWALD.

I have seen them in the court-yard—I dare say they will soon come in. They only require a little instruction before they enter.

Enter MADAME MALORTIE.*

MADAME MALORTIE.

May the children of the inhabitants be permitted to enter?

* Another lady in attendance on the Princess Sophia Dorothea at Ahlden.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Certainly. I shall be glad to see them.

[*Madame Malortie admits several farmers' children, rustically clad, and tries to place them in a half circle; they press towards each other.*]

MADAME MALORTIE.

This is well done. Now you must all pay your respects.

[*The children make awkward bows and curtsies.*]

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Good morning. Come a little nearer. I dare say you have all been good children, and have rejoiced your parents by paying obedience to their commands. There are some cakes. Now you must behave properly and dutifully at home, must attend to your lessons, and willingly fulfil the desires of your parents. Good bye—good bye.

[*Exeunt children.*

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

It is very apparent that the awkwardness of some of these children has much decreased, and that others are very well-behaved. If they came more frequently, their rudeness would soon disappear.

MADAME MALORTIE.

How rejoiced they always are whenever they know they are permitted to come. The whole village resounds with the praise of the amiable Princess, who gladdens these little creatures with such trifles.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Will Superintendent Seelhorst come this afternoon?

MADAME VON ARENSWALD.

He will, as desired, come to pay his respects.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Have you requested the head cook to provide what I told you for the company this afternoon?

MADAME VON ARENSWALD.

I told him what I was commanded, and he waits, as he was directed, for further orders.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

I must go and write down the other things that are to be dressed for supper.

PRISON REFLECTIONS.

AHLDEN, 1726.

Enter Princess Sophia Dorothea.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

I CONTINUE to walk in this castle from one of my apartments to the other, but all the time I have been confined and watched here, which is now nearly thirty-two years, I have not found comfort anywhere so long as they denied me my liberty, which, although I sought it by every means in my power, I could not obtain. I hope Count Bar's new plans may succeed. The same things, always repeated over and over again daily and weekly, become tiresome and tedious. Nevertheless it is true that the administration of the

three domains, and the customs along the Weser and Aller, as also the letting of mills and other things relating to the domains, produce at times a little variety. But they have also caused some unpleasant circumstances. My correspondence, which formerly occupied many leisure hours, and which sometimes revived my spirits and cheered me, has, since my mother's death, become very difficult, if not entirely impossible.

But I do not see why my daughter, during her sojourn in Hanover, should not have replied to my letters, instead of merely sending me the now returned presents, with a most singular verbal message. I can scarcely think that she also has turned against me, as I have always hitherto received undoubted marks of her love and tender affection. (*Listens.*)

Do I hear right? Yes, it is the organ I presented to the church. It ought to have been better, according to my expectations. (*Goes to a window.*) Undoubtedly the more straight streets of the village that have been arranged to procure me a better view from here, afford me some change, and I am glad I spent such considerable sums for the benefit of the inhabitants that partly

lost their property by fire seven years ago. The peaceful people of this place will enjoy their improved habitations as much as I feel satisfied in having assisted them; but when I see them walking to and fro, and attending to their labour, then I feel myself in these narrow walls so completely encompassed and enclosed, that I the more regret the great loss of my liberty.

Of what use are magnificence, and splendour, and riches, and other advantages, if I cannot even leave one room to enter another without being watched? Moreover, I dare not leave the castle but by permission of a bailiff, and not then without a strong guard. I am really surprised that they allow me to drive my chaise myself. But there is no danger of an escape, because, besides the guard of cavalry, I am always accompanied by ten or twelve of my servants on horseback, all appointed to attend me and be spies on my movements. The only comfort I find in my confined situation is in affording relief to the poor, and making frequent advances to the farmers to diminish their misery, and in the distribution of other charitable funds. (*Drumming is heard in the distance.*)

I hear the parade of the castle-guard one day like the other, placing the sentinels on the ramparts and near the gate of my prison, to guard me, and for ever to rob me of my liberty. My earliest news of my daughter gave me some hopes by the letters of Count de Bar; nevertheless, I trust he will not expose himself to danger. I am almost afraid his new plan to liberate me will not succeed, particularly when I consider that the only one of all the servants by whom I am surrounded, upon whom I thought I could place confidence, Lüdemann, is now also gained over to my enemies. He is, I have now no doubt, a traitor to me. And the rest appear to be here only to watch my actions and to listen to what I say, in order to transmit information, or more likely to turn and misrepresent my words and actions so as to calumniate me, and cause new severities to be ordered on the pretence of preventing my escape.

Enter LÜDEMANN.

LÜDEMANN.

In accordance to your highness's commands, I have come instantly for new commands.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA, (*terrified*).

What news have you from Count de Bar?

LÜDEMANN.

That his plans are discovered.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

How? His plans discovered; and also that he has got himself into trouble.

LÜDEMANN.

The Count has saved himself, and what is still more extraordinary, it is known that he has proved himself innocent. I believe it was for the benefit of your highness that the Queen of Prussia sent by Frederic the message relating to the Count; otherwise I cannot see how, after absenting himself, he could have so quickly been pardoned, and returned unmolested.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Consequently he is safe. (*Dejectedly.*) But all my hopes are now destroyed,—all is lost,—and there is nothing left me but to die in confinement. I can look for consolation only in my firm belief in the goodness of Providence. To God I will trust entirely henceforth; to Him I will entirely leave my fate, and endeavour to remain at peace and finish my days in quietness.

I have been informed that my children, the Queen and the Prince of Wales, enjoy the best health. Have you any news respecting the King's health.

LÜDEMANN.

His majesty is well; and devotes several hours daily to business.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Have you anything more to report?

LÜDEMANN.

Nothing in particular; but that the accounts of the domains are ready for your highness's inspection.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Whenever I find myself disposed to look at them, I will inform you. [*Exit Lüdemann.*

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

Consequently my last and most certain hopes have also been destroyed; and possibly I shall now, by being more closely watched, never attain my only wish—my liberty. This is mournful—it is grievous. [*Sinks on a chair in a swoon.*

Enter MADAME MALORTIE AND MADAME VON ARENSWALD.

MADAME MALORTIE.

What is the matter with your highness?

MADAME VON ARENSWALD.

Permit us to accompany you to your chamber.

PRINCESS SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

I am now a little better. Such attacks, however, must at last become fatal. If repeated, they will soon finish my earthly career. I think it will be best to send for the superintendent, that I may at least have the comfort of religion. But first conduct me to my bed-room.

No addition appears to have been made to this singular diary, which must have been transmitted by the unhappy prisoner to the confidential friend in whose hands it was placed, shortly after completing the foregoing conversation. Possibly the attack of illness the Princess has here recorded, she took as a warning, and at once proceeded to make her final arrangements. She died in the same year.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

PARTICULARS CONCERNING THE HERETOFORE ELECTORAL PRINCESS SOPHIE DOROTHEA OF HANOVER, STYLED PRINCESS OF AHLDEN, CONSORT OF THE ELECTORAL PRINCE GEORGE LEWIS, AFTERWARDS KING GEORGE I. OF BREAT BRITAIN. WRITTEN BY THE LADY OF HONOUR TO THE ELECTORAL PRINCESS, MADEMOISELLE VON DEM KNESEBECK.

[Probably written between the years 1710 and 1713, by the former lady of honour to the repudiated Electoral Princess, and afterwards lady of honour to her daughter the Crown Princess, subsequently Queen and Consort of King Frederick William I. of Prussia.]

If fortune ever exalted, and misfortune, on the contrary, ever depressed any one, this has been the case with the illustrious mother and grandmother of my Crown Princess [of Prussia]; for when Duke George William, of Zelle, fell in love with Madame d'Olbreuse, he mar-

ried her, though his brother Duke Ernest Augustus, afterwards Elector, next successor to the principality of Zelle, was totally averse to this marriage, because Duke George William had previously given a promise that he never would marry, that after his death he might leave his dominions to him. The prudent Duchess of Zelle improved her good fortune with such skill, and so profited by the extraordinary affection of her husband, that she entirely possessed his heart, and the Duke was ready to gratify all her wishes.

The offspring of this union was a daughter, the Princess Sophia Dorothea, who had not her equal in Germany for either wealth or beauty. From her infancy, therefore, she was sought in marriage by great potentates. But her parents preferred to all others, Augustus Frederick, eldest son of Duke Antony Ulrick, of Wolfenbüttel, as well on account of the especial friendship which subsisted between Duke George William and Duke Antony Ulrick, as for the incomparable endowments, corporeal and mental, possessed by the prince. The young Princess, too, manifested such a tender attachment to this her betrothed prince, that their union could not have been otherwise than happy, if a desire to go to the war had not caused Prince Augustus Frederick to lose his life, in the flower of his age, by an unlucky ball, before the fortress of Philippsburg, and to sacrifice his noble blood for his country, before he could consummate this

marriage. Duke Antony Ulrick, afflicted at this loss, endeavoured at least to secure the advantage hoped for from the alliance with the house of Zelle, and solicited, for his consolation, of the Duke of Zelle, his acceptance of his other son, Augustus William, as a husband for the Princess Sophie Dorothea, instead of the deceased Prince Augustus Frederick. In none did this excite more jealousy than in Duke Ernest Augustus of Hanover, who not only hated Duke Antony Ulrick, from a natural antipathy, as vehemently as his brother, Duke George William, loved him, but also feared nothing more than the union of the houses of Zelle and Wolfenbüttel; and therefore, he had rejoiced as much at the rupture of the intended alliance by the death of Prince Augustus Frederick, as he was now chagrined to learn that it was likely to be renewed in the person of the other prince.

Urged by these motives, he was induced to solicit in marriage for his eldest son, Prince George Lewis, the said Princess Sophie Dorothea, to whose mother both he and his consort, the Duchess, afterwards Electress Dowager Sophia, had been inimically disposed.

Sophia, who, as a princess of the royal house of England, and daughter of the former Elector Palatine, considered herself as one of the greatest princesses in the world, and the Duchess of Zelle as far beneath her, was obliged, at the earnest request of the Duke her husband, to make the proposal herself, and that in the greatest

haste, because the hereditary Prince of Wolfenbüttel had already set out for Zelle to complete the match.

She arrived there early in the morning, before the Duke of Zelle and his consort had risen, and was admitted to their bed-side.* It vexed her not a little to think that the Duchess of Zelle would hear all that she had to say, and to what a degree she and her husband thereby humbled themselves, and therefore spoke to the Duke in Low Saxon, so that the Duchess did not understand them.

Nothing could have been more gratifying to the Duke than this visit, and so the tender affection which he felt for this his only daughter instantly persuaded him not to let slip the opportunity for this desirable match, by means of which, moreover, permanent concord would be established between these two houses, and rather to break his promise given to the Wolfenbüttel prince, than to reject this advantageous marriage. In consequence, without any long consideration of the matter, and without consulting his wife, he at once declared to the Duchess of Hanover that he would comply with the Duke's desire, and give the Princess, his daughter, to Prince George Lewis.

During this conversation, the Duchess of Zelle became

* The account of this visit, given by the Princess, varies from this in some particulars. Other variations will be found in the writer's narrative, but none of any importance.

impatient to learn the purport of it; and, though she spoke several times and asked her husband in a whisper, what business the Duchess of Hanover had come upon, she could not learn it till the Duchess of Hanover was gone. Instead of rejoicing at it, she beheld, as it were, in spirit what misery this match would bring along with it, and could not possibly imagine that a proposal so suddenly made, and kept so secret from her, could proceed from any kind intention. Had it depended upon her, the Prince of Wolfenbüttel would not have been so ignominiously rejected, when he was obliged to return home, and relinquish this rich prize to the Prince of Hanover.

As this Prince contracted this marriage more for reasons of state than from affection, how could there be any true love either on his part or on that of the Princess? Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that the Princess conducted herself towards her husband as became and befitted a true and faithful wife.

Now Duke Ernest Augustus of Hanover, whom I shall henceforth call the Elector, kept a considerable court; this and the splendid style in which he lived drew to Hanover many foreign gentlemen, among whom young Königsmark conducted himself in a singular manner, was loved and admired by many, and likewise envied by many.

He had been, when a boy, at the court of Duke George

William, and there brought up with the young Princess Sophie Dorothea, which produced such an extraordinary familiarity and friendship between these two, that the Princess had nobody to whom she could open her heart as to this young Count; and it is possible that this long continued familiarity might have given rise on the part of Königsmark to a warmer feeling than friendship, which, however, he strove most anxiously to conceal, as if afraid to acknowledge even to himself the sentiment that filled his heart.

As secretly as love swayed the Count, so openly did the Elector Ernest Augustus manifest the partiality which he had fixed upon a certain lady at his court, who was called the beautiful Platen. She was the wife of the first servant of the Elector, Count Platen, and enjoyed the Elector's particular regard without disturbance, for neither the Electress nor her husband exhibited the slightest jealousy. Indeed the Electress was much too sensible a woman to excite her husband's displeasure by jealousy; and Count Platen appeared to value the favour of the Elector much too highly not to submit to anything in order to retain it.

Powerfully as the Elector was swayed by this passion, it behoved him not the less to exert himself for the aggrandisement of his house. No sooner had he effected the marriage of his son with the Princess of Zelle, than he became aware of the importance of cultivating a favourable disposition in the Duke of Zelle, in order to

acquire by degrees a participation in the government of the Lüneburg territories, that things might be conducted there according to his will, and neither the Duke nor his servants oppose his projects. There was no better way to accomplish this purpose than to gain privy-councillor von Bernstorf, who was not only prime-minister to Duke George William, but had secured the confidence and good opinion of his master to such a degree, that he followed his advice in all circumstances and undertook nothing without it. The Duchess of Zelle, strong as was her influence over her husband, could not counteract the power of Bernstorf; for it was often the case that she manifested her displeasure at things which were injurious to her, and upon which he was engaged; which only served to make him listen the more readily to the Elector of Hanover, as well that he might retain his present authority after the Duke's death, under the Elector, as to revenge himself in due time on the Duchess for her occasional opposition to him.

When Bernstorf was thus gained by M. von Platen for the court of Hanover, the advantage was soon perceived, for that court had at once, through privy-councillor von Bernstorf, more authority in the duchy of Zelle than Duke George William himself: and the Duchess repented too late that she had not pursued the course followed by the Hanoverian court, namely conciliated Bern

storf, and that she had relied exclusively on the power which she possessed over the Duke.

The affection cherished for her by the Duke was, it is true, not diminished: but she could easily calculate how injurious it might prove to her some day that M. von Bernstorf was her enemy, and that he had become wholly and solely the creature of the court of Hanover, which, though her daughter was the wife of the hereditary Prince there, she knew to be unfavourably disposed towards her.

Now, as the fondness of the Duke of Zelle for his daughter was exceedingly great, and he imagined that he could not establish her happiness more firmly than by complying in all things with the court of Hanover, and showing all possible complaisance to his daughter's husband, the Electoral Prince, George Lewis, and as Bernstorf confirmed him in this opinion, the consequence was that the authority of the Electoral court gradually increased in the dominions of Zelle, and those of Hanover had more influence at the court of the Duke of Zelle than his own servants.

While Bernstorf thus governed the court of Zelle, the Countess Platen did the same at Hanover. The Elector consulted her upon all important matters, and so evident was his partiality for her, that if, as I have already observed, the prudent Electress had not winked at it, it might have occasioned great disharmony.

The Princess of Zelle, not trained to this forbearance, was not endowed with the faculty of contemplating with such patience the power of the Countess Platen, but was often chagrined to see the preference shown to her in everything, and how she commanded the resources of the Elector, so that nobody at court, not even the Princess herself, could rival her in splendour of dress and decoration.

A person possessing youth, and at the same time superior in rank and beauty to others, can rarely bear to see them put upon a level with her, still less raised above her. Hence the innocent envy, with which the Electoral Princess regarded the haughty Countess; the freedom with which, in conversation with the courtiers, she jested upon pretensions so far above her rank; and the pleasure she took in surpassing her in magnificence of dress, and of hearing it said that the Countess Platen was not to be compared to her for beauty.

These petty misunderstandings which arose at court had at first no unpleasant consequences, since the court of Hanover, as I have said, in spite of the imperial court at Vienna, launched out into all imaginary pomp and amusements, and had no time amidst these dissipations to think of such little annoyances; but the bad passions thus generated struck deeper and deeper root, and in time produced deplorable results, as I shall presently show.

But, in addition to the public *liaison* of the Elector and the secret passion of Count Königsmark, there was at the court of Hanover, what may be called an intermediate sort of connexion, in which the Electoral Prince George Lewis was involved. A lady, named Mademoiselle von Schulenburg, obtained above all others the honour of being preferred to the Electoral Princess Sophie Dorothea; and, as this Princess could not submit to the affront with as much patience as the Electress showed in regard to the Countess Platen, she drew upon herself so many mortifications, that she ceased to care about those vexations hitherto occasioned by Countess Platen.

I, Mademoiselle von Knesebeck, came about this time to court, and was admitted, to my misfortune, into the confidential intimacy of the Electoral Princess, who preferred me to all the other ladies, and was incessantly enlarging on her dissatisfaction with Countess Platen, and her jealousy of Schulenburg. It would have been no worse for the poor Electoral Princess, if I had been the only one who enjoyed the confidence; but she went further, and could not refrain from communicating everything to Count Königsmark, for her only pleasure consisted in talking to us on these subjects; and, as I was charged to watch and inform the Princess of the movements of Schulenburg, so the Count was to report all that passed at Countess Platen's; and as that lady was intimate not with the Elector alone, but had many ad-

mirers, Count Platen, her husband, bore all with great patience, and had them daily to dine at his house.

Though my Princess had, to the great joy of the country, given birth to a prince, and some years afterwards been happily delivered of a daughter, my Crown Princess of Prussia, those events did not serve to revive that affection which the Crown Prince ought to have felt for his wife, but, from day to day, he became colder towards her, and even separated himself from her, having a bed-chamber to himself, and indulging in no sort of familiarity with her than what he was obliged to do before people as a blind.

So long as he went no further than this coldness, my Princess cared not for it; she made not the least complaint on the subject to her parents, but continued in her former career, assuming a cheerful look before people, but in private considering her situation with Königsmark and me.

One year, during the carnival, among other diversions, there was given a ball, which was attended by the court. On this occasion, young Königsmark exhibited such astonishing skill and expertness in dancing, that he excited the admiration of everybody, and of the Countess Platen in particular. She did not hesitate to go up to him before all present, and to pay him the highest compliments on his performance, declaring that she was surprised and fascinated, and begging him, when the assembly was over, to call upon her.

This her command was the more agreeable, because he hoped in the house of Countess Platen to pick up something with which he could afterwards entertain and divert our Princess. When the Countess Platen found herself alone with him in her house, she revealed her passion to him without reserve, and at the same time employed such allurements that he, a young man, fond of pleasure, and not scrupling to enjoy it, was ready in all things to comply with her wishes.

He made no secret of this to the Princess when he next came to see her, and as she was no friend to Countess Platen, it amused her to converse about her vicious courses with Königsmark and me. He was required to relate to her circumstantially all that afterwards passed between him and Platen; and it is very possible, as this gave Königsmark frequent occasion to be with my Princess, that he sometimes added fictitious circumstances which had never happened, that he might miss no opportunity of being in her company.

The beautiful Countess Platen, closely watching the movements of her new paramour, discovered his frequent visits to the Princess, and soon betrayed symptoms of jealousy to Königsmark, and ordered him to discontinue his calls on the Princess. When he informed the Princess of this, it suggested to her the advice that, in order to escape the persecution of the Countess, Königsmark should obey her, and abstain from frequenting the society of the Princess.

Hard as this course appeared to him, it was found to be absolutely necessary. But in order not to be entirely deprived of this agreeable conversation, which could not now be carried on verbally, it was transformed into a written one, so that scarcely a day passed without letters from Königsmark, or from the Princess to him; and I was obliged to serve for the channel through which they were transmitted.

Though it might well have been supposed that the jealousy of the Countess would be pacified by this compliance, that sly intriguer did not fail to perceive that Count Königsmark beheld the Electoral Princess with different eyes from what she could endure him to do; he was therefore obliged to lay himself under the greatest restraint whenever the Countess Platen was present, and to take no notice of the Princess, who, as I have already mentioned, had not a more intimate friend in the whole court than this noble Count, and who did not strictly observe the necessary caution, so that frequently, contrary to agreement, she would, even in the presence of the Countess, join Count Königsmark, as well to vex the former as to procure herself a pleasure in the conversation of the latter.

Hereupon, the Countess Platen, in order to be revenged on her, suggested to the Elector Ernest Augustus, to watch the proceedings of the Electoral Princess, and he would soon discover that her intercourse with Königsmark indicated more than might be supposed.

The Elector, not aware that this warning proceeded from jealousy, rather regarded it as a sign of the faithful attachment cherished by Platen for himself and his electoral house; but did not fail, after receiving this warning, to treat her as kindly as before, so that nobody might perceive how she and Königsmark were watched, and all their proceedings closely observed. In like manner as the Princess, from extraordinary friendship for Königsmark, and the antipathy which she cherished against Platen, manifested her contempt for the Countess on every occasion, so, out of the attachment which she owed to her husband, the Electoral Prince George Lewis, she launched out as violently against Schulenburg, especially when she perceived that she was daily establishing herself more firmly in the Prince's favour, when she put me to watch her, and I concealed nothing that came to my knowledge relative to this connexion. In consequence, the letters of the Princess to Königsmark were filled with details relative to Schulenburg and Platen, and both of them omitted no opportunity of mortifying Schulenburg, who did not fail to complain to the Electoral Prince; and this gave rise to great dissensions between the Electoral Prince and his consort, which were carried at last to such a pitch, that, one day, the Prince, overpowered with passion, seized the Princess by the throat, and thrust her with such violence against the wall, that she must have been choked, if I and others had not come to her assistance.

It was impossible for the Electoral Princess to endure this cruel treatment without the most painful emotions; and, as she durst not complain of it either to the Elector or the Electress, she had recourse to her father, the Duke of Zelle, and begged permission to stay with him a few weeks.

This intelligence was so painful to the good Duke and the Duchess, that the Electoral Princess received no small consolation from the pity which they testified. But when she intimated to the Duke that it was intolerable to her to remain upon such a footing with the Prince her husband, who did not treat her like a husband, the Duke would not listen to her request, to the effect that he would take her under his protection, and keep her at his court. To this piteous complaint, he replied that, if she had any love for him as her father, she must submit patiently to her fate, and rather suffer anything in the world than think of such a separation from her husband. The Duchess, more deeply moved by her daughter's urgent entreaties, endeavoured to prevail upon Bernstorf to use his influence for giving effect to the petition of the Princess. But he too was opposed to it, and represented to the Duchess what dangerous consequences might arise from such a separation, and how it was likely to affect herself and her daughter after the Duke's death.

Though this advice of Bernstorf's was considered by the Duke, as well as the Duchess, to proceed from the

attachment of a faithful servant, that minister was influenced by a different motive, for he gave that advice for the benefit and service of the electoral court, which otherwise, if the Princess had returned to her father, might have lost a great deal in Zelle; because the Duke of Zelle might easily have reverted to the former idea of giving part of his territory, after his decease, to the Duke of Wolfenbüttel, who made as great claims to it as the Elector of Hanover, which latter was preferred to that Duke when the marriage with the Princess Sophia Dorothea took place.

When this disconsolate Princess was thus dismissed and obliged, in obedience to her parents, to return to her husband, she found him not milder but more violent: his conduct towards her was a series of ill-usage, aggravated in particular by the reports which Bernstorf had sent to Hanover of all that the Princess had told her parents.

After this intelligence, the Elector watched the Princess much more closely than ever, and as this disconsolate Princess was not sufficiently cautious, and did not find in correspondence with Königsmark so much comfort as in conversation, he was summoned through my means to come to her quite privately: and, as on her side despair, so on his side ardent passion suggested that the Princess should leave Hanover, to escape from the tyranny which she would have to endure, and seek protection from

the Duke of Wolfenbüttel who, as she believed, would not hesitate to receive her, as he had always manifested extraordinary friendship for her.

Count Königsmark was to attend her in this journey; he was also to furnish for the purpose the necessary funds, of which the Princess was exceedingly deficient.

Before the requisite preparations for this flight could be made, Königsmark went to Saxony, to the Elector, the present King Augustus, upon business of his own. The indiscretion which attached to this Count, as to all young men, impelled him publicly, in presence of many gentlemen and the Elector of Saxony, to boast of what had passed between him and Countess Platen, and in what favour he was with the Electoral Princess. One of his auditors, who had formerly been at the court of the Duke of Zelle, and been obliged to leave it on account of the Princess, because a free intercourse with the said Princess might have proved prejudicial to her, reported all that Königsmark had said to Hanover, and worked up the Elector there and the Countess Platen into such rage against Königsmark, for he had not spared either the Elector, or the Countess, or the Electoral Prince, or Schulenburg, that Platen in particular, thought of nothing but how to revenge herself, and conceived as violent a hatred as she had before felt love for Königsmark.

I have forgotten to mention the reason why Countess Platen was displeased with Königsmark, before she re-

ceived those accounts from Saxony. He observed to her one day that she was pregnant by him, because her husband had been absent above a year, at Vienna, whither he had been sent with congratulations to the Emperor Leopold, on the coronation of Joseph as King of the Romans; she was relieved, it is true, from the apprehension that this affair might prejudice her honour and prosperity as well with the Elector as with her husband, for Königsmark procured her a sure remedy for ridding her of this burden. As her condition could not be kept so secret but that remarks were made on her connexion with Königsmark, in which the Electoral Princess joined, she proposed to Königsmark, in order to dispel the suspicion which was thrown upon them both, to marry her daughter, which Königsmark declined, alleging that he was not capable of committing incest. This tenderness of conscience Platen took highly amiss, and therefore conceived a violent hatred for him, though she had loved him to distraction before his journey to Saxony.

When this speech of his had completely kindled her revenge, she was continually intimating to the Elector, that he ought to get rid of Königsmark, who had not merely presumed to promulgate such prodigious lies to the prejudice of her honour; but also for the discovery of the truth in regard to the Electoral Princess, since it seemed more than certain that he had so dishonoured the [illegible] court of the Elector, that nothing short of his blood was [illegible] capable of washing away the disgrace.

The Elector listened to his respected Countess, and deemed her just as innocent as the Electoral Princess, who, he would not believe, could forget herself so far as the Countess imagined, and as it would appear certain from the letters received from Saxony. In consequence, he resolved to dismiss Königsmark from his service, without molesting the Princess, whom, though he knew on what bad terms she lived with his son, and how desirous she was on that account to go to her parents, he wished not to offend, from political reasons, inasmuch as through her the possession of the country of Zelle would some time or other be wholly secured to him. The Countess Platen was not satisfied with this mode of proceeding, because the Electoral Princess was, if anything, a more especial object of her revenge than Königsmark himself. She therefore persuaded the Elector to cause the Princess to be more narrowly watched than ever, that it might be ascertained whether she had spoken the truth; at the same time, she invented many things to the prejudice of the Princess, and among the rest she assured the Elector that she had positive information that the Princess was pregnant, not by her husband of course, because he had not cohabited with her for several years.

When Königsmark, not dreaming of his disgrace, appeared again at court, his presence was so agreeable to the Princess, that she hesitated not to converse with him publicly. But, having a great desire to learn from him

how he had parted from Platen before his journey, which he had not then time to tell her, and could not let her know in writing, she requested him to come to her.* He then related to her all that had happened when he took leave of the Countess, and how he had refused to marry her daughter. She acquainted him, on her part, with what had taken place during his absence with her husband, and the mortifications she had to suffer on account of Mademoiselle von Schulenburg, adding that, as he had now returned, they must think of her flight, the idea of which so delighted the Princess, that for a long time she had not been in such spirits. This was partly owing also to the droll humour of Königsmark, who related to her all sorts of laughable things which had occurred at the court of the Elector of Saxony, so that this interview lasted longer than was prudent, and, when I urged them to put an end to it, Königsmark at length left her, not knowing that he had spoken for the last time with the Princess.

When he was gone, the next hour was spent by the Princess in packing up her jewels for the purpose of taking them with her in her flight, never dreaming how soon she should be obliged to take a shorter journey with them.

Next morning, we heard that Königsmark was nowhere

* The meeting was not fixed, but Königsmark came after receiving a note written by Platen, who had imitated the hand of the Princess.—*Original*

to be found. This report prevailed for several days, and caused my Princess no little uneasiness, because she could not conceive what had become of him, as it was not likely that he should have undertaken any journey without her knowledge.

As I learned, after diligent inquiry, that all his papers had been seized at his lodgings and carried to the Elector, the Princess was overwhelmed with mortal terror, concluding that all the letters which she had sent to Königsmark were among them. Her conjecture was too fully realised; for, soon afterwards, we were informed by an officer of the Elector's who was particularly attached to the Princess, that the Elector had placed all these letters in the hands of the Countess Platen, who was to examine and to report upon them. Nothing more favourable to her designs could have happened, for she now had the means, not only of consummating her revenge on my Princess and poor Königsmark, but also of concealing her intrigue with him, by abstracting all the letters relating to it, and preserving those only which ridiculed the proceedings of the Elector, described the unfeeling conduct of her father of Zelle, animadverted on her husband and Schulenburg, and exposed her design to abscond in company with Königsmark, and to seek the protection of the Duke of Wolfenbüttel, because it had been refused by her father, the Duke of Zelle.

What did her the greatest injury was this,—that in her vexation she applied opprobrious epithets to the Duke, her father, and also to the Elector, and used such expressions towards Königsmark, that whoever was disposed to expound them to her disadvantage might easily excite suspicion of an illicit love for that young Count.

The person who disclosed all this to us added that the Elector had immediately sent Count Platen to Zelle, to communicate all this to the Duke and Duchess. It is easy to conceive with what alarm and affliction these unexpected tidings must have filled the Duchess, and how they must have exasperated the Duke against his daughter, whom he had hitherto loved so fervently, and whom he never could have supposed to be capable of thus forgetting in her letters the respect that was due to him.

The Duchess, aware that there was no chance of succeeding, durst not attempt any remonstrance with the Duke of Zelle, in the exasperated state in which he was; she therefore had recourse to Bernstorf, for whom she had hitherto shown no particular respect, and made him magnificent promises, if he would save her daughter from the misfortune which threatened her, and preserve her from disgrace.

Bernstorf chuckled at finding the Duchess in so humble a state, and neither promised nor declined to serve her, saying that the Princess must first be interro-

gated before it was possible to give any advice on the subject.

The Duchess gained but little by this explanation, and while Count Platen was still there, letters arrived from my Princess to her parents, beseeching them in the most moving terms to take her part, and not suffer her to be disgraced.

As little comfort as the good Princess derived from that quarter, so little did she receive from the Elector, who returned a polite answer to the letter which she addressed to him on the subject, and promised her all possible favour; but soon after the return of Count Platen to Zelle, he sent him and the principal officers of his court to the Princess, to inform her that "she had offended too grievously for him to suffer her to remain any longer at his court, and he should therefore send her back to Zelle;" and Count Platen had the impudence to inquire "how far she was gone in her pregnancy by Königsmark." This touched the high-minded Princess so acutely, that she indignantly asked "whether he mistook her for his lascivious wife, who, and not she, had been pregnant by Königsmark;" and she could not refrain from pouring forth all that she knew of the dissolute life of the Countess Platen: but this, so far from doing any good to her own cause, only served to enrage the Elector still more, because he was too fond of the Countess not to resent the scorn that was manifested for her.

I was now separated from my Princess, and likewise closely interrogated, and prompted by the same impatience as my Princess to use hard words, which brought me into such a situation that I might have fared no better than the unfortunate Count Königsmark did, had not fate released me from the imprisonment in which I was kept.

When, after this examination, it was intimated to the Princess that she must prepare for her journey to the dominions of Zelle, she was informed, to increase her affliction, that Königsmark, on the evening that he left her, had been killed in defending himself from being arrested.

Perfectly innocent as was the Princess in the friendship which from infancy she had cherished for Count Königsmark, so blameable was she for her behaviour, when she heard of the deplorable death of the Count, who was destined to lose his life for her sake. It was impossible for her, in the first moment, to conceal the pain she felt: she complained bitterly, and several times wished that, now Königsmark had died on her account, she could die too; and, as I have said, she thereby excited suspicion that she had been on terms of more than ordinary friendship with the deceased Count. The Countess availed herself of this circumstance to persuade the Elector that she had sure information that the Princess was pregnant, which the Elector would not be-

fore believe; but now he directed the intelligence to be sent to Zelle, which augmented not a little the anger of the Duke and the affliction of the Duchess.

The day of her departure having arrived, she desired first to see her children, which was granted, and my Crown Princess, then eight years old, had to take her sorrowful farewell of the Princess her mother.

She was then taken to Ahlden, which place was to serve for her residence, and was there examined on different points, and in particular asked whether she had not kept up an illicit connexion with Königsmark, whether she was not pregnant by him, and whether she had not projected the flight to Wolfenbüttel in defiance of the whole electoral house. Freely and frankly as she confessed the last, alleging that the cruelty of the Electoral Prince had forced her to that resolution, so firmly did she reply to the other points, and desired, in attestation of her innocence, to have the holy sacrament administered to her upon it.

Countess Platen, fearing that the innocence of the Princess might thereby be brought to light, strove to prevent it by all possible means; but the desire of Duke George William prevailed, for in his country such a requisition could not be refused. The Princess was accordingly permitted to take the sacrament. She went boldly and cheerfully to the table of the Lord, and when

the minister, after a long admonitory address from the altar, presented the sacrament to her, she took it, in presence of the envoys of the Elector, the principal of whom was Count Platen, with the greatest firmness, to the no small astonishment of Platen, to whom, after the service was over, she turned, saying that "now she challenged his wife to take the holy communion also in attestation of her chastity."

This put an end to the malicious report previously circulated against the Princess, but not to her afflictions; for the Duke of Zelle was so implacable on account of the derogatory expressions which she had used in one of her letters, that he would not hear of her; and the humiliating overture of the Duchess to M. von Bernstorf was of no avail, for he did not hesitate to tell her plumply that it was now too late to assist her daughter, and he must say it was her own fault if she was in her present situation.

The Elector treated her with greater clemency than her own father; for, either fearing that the Duke might become reconciled to his daughter, and render doubtful his succession to portions of the territories of Zelle, or from a relic of fondness for his daughter-in-law, he caused this message to be secretly communicated to her, that "if she would humble herself, and confess that she had gone too far against her husband, the Crown Prince,

and would live on better terms with him in future, all should be forgotten, and she reinstated in her former dignity."

As she was now in such great tribulation that she could neither advise nor help herself, she consulted Bernstorf, who had been sent to question her about one thing or another. He, apprehensive lest the daughter as well as the mother might some day repay his conduct towards them, dissuaded her from humbling herself, because she would thereby proclaim herself guilty to the world, but to persist in her determination, as he could assure her, on the part of the Duke her father, that he would receive her, and not suffer her to live any longer under the tyrannical yoke of the Electoral Prince George Lewis.

More agreeable advice than this could not have been given her, and she thereupon began to complain bitterly of the harsh treatment of the Elector, who had turned her out of his court, and at the same time declared that "neither now nor ever did she desire to be again by the side of the Electoral Pri---e, but would pass the rest of her life with her parents."[2n]

On the first point, never to live with the Electoral Prince again, her determination was acceded to; on the other, to live with her parents, she was doomed to be disappointed; for the Elector was anew incensed, and further incited by Countess Platen, the Electoral Prince,

and Schulenburg. Duke George William was thereupon persuaded, at the instigation of Bernstorf, to take an oath that he would never release his daughter from her confinement,—that he would never see her; and, on the other hand, the Elector engaged that, after his death, he would keep the Princess well, and provide for her, and allow her to live with the Duchess, her mother.

After this, while the Princess was residing in her place of captivity, a court appointed for the purpose declared the Electoral Prince to be entirely free from her, that her marriage was dissolved, and must henceforth be considered null and void; which gave Mademoiselle Schulenburg no small hope of stepping publicly into the place of the Electoral Princess, which she already filled in private. But as she was disappointed and did not attain that dignity, so the Princess also found herself deceived; for, though she was pronounced free from the marriage, she could not obtain the liberty to go to her parents, which was to her an affliction the more severe, because Schulenburg enjoyed quietly the love of her Prince, though she did not become his wife.

M. von Bernstorf, having succeeded in depriving my good Princess of her dignity for ever, continued to make his Duke timid, and to inculcate that he ought in all things to comply with the wishes of the Electoral Court. Hence the good Duke was induced to deny himself the society of his daughter, his anger against whom had

gradually subsided, as he felt more and more convinced of her innocence by the ordeal of the holy sacrament; and, though he could not entirely forgive the sarcastic expressions which she had used in writing to Königsmark, still all this would not have prevented him from seeing her again, had not Bernstorf hindered it by his potent advice, at the same time reminding the Duke of the oath he had taken, and so frustrating his intention.

With great difficulty the Duchess at length obtained permission to visit her daughter now and then, but this afforded no particular pleasure either to the Duchess or her daughter, because their conversation turned upon nothing that could bring comfort to them.

Thus passed the years which the Princess spent in confinement, during which my present Crown Princess and her brother heard nothing of their mother, and durst not even speak of her, or inquire concerning her situation.

As, however, the Duke of Zelle loved his daughter exceedingly, he began at length to find it intolerable not to see her again. But whenever he would have set about this, M. von Bernstorf contrived to raise so many objections, that he resolved to defer it till he should be upon his death-bed. And death did actually overtake him, so that the earnest wish of the good Duke and of the Princess to see one another again could not be accomplished.

I have already mentioned that the Duke of Wolfenbüttel, who had always lived in particularly intimate friendship with the Duke of Zelle, had claims upon the principality of Zelle. The Elector of Hanover was afraid of that Prince. M. von Bernstorf, therefore, shortly before the decease of Duke George William, persuaded him, notwithstanding all the friendship that subsisted between them, upon pretext that the Duke of Brunswick meditated the invasion of his country, to attack him, and endeavour to take from him the city of Brunswick, which end, however, was not attained. I have mentioned this merely for the purpose of showing the power of the Duke of Brunswick, which I can further confirm by the fact that he contributed materially to the dissension between the Electoral Prince George Lewis and Prince Maximilian, and prevailed upon the latter, by one or other crafty representation, to attempt to make war upon the Electoral Prince, which, however, turned out unfortunately for Maximilian.

But, these circumstances being sufficiently known, I will not here enter into a recapitulation of them, but finish my narrative with a brief notice of the melancholy fate which befel the mother and grandmother of my present Crown Princess, after the accession of the Elector George Lewis.

No sooner did the Elector find himself in quiet possession of the territories of Zelle and Hanover, than so

many mortifications were inflicted on the good Duchess and the Princess, that the Duchess was unable, in her old age, to bear up against them. The Princess, however, made her long captivity so tolerable by her incomparable patience, that she now lives in perfect quiet, resolved not to indulge in any further vain hopes of deliverance.

My Crown Princess, who was meanwhile married to the Crown Prince of Prussia, has the pain to know that her mother is in such a situation, without being acquainted with her, or being able to afford her filial assistance; as the regulations of state prevailing everywhere prevent the King of Prussia from taking up the cause of the imprisoned Princess, so that she must look to God alone for that relief which she cannot hope for from men.

As time is wanting, I cannot relate the circumstances attending my own imprisonment and my release from it.

Heaven having now granted me, after enduring so much unhappiness, the satisfaction of waiting upon the daughter of my former Princess, with whom I hope to end my days, if it does but preserve me from doubting its just judgments, I shall see the Electoral Princess again in a better position. Not only has the Countess Platen died a miserable death, but the vengeance of Heaven against M. von Bernstorf has already manifested itself in many points, not the least important of which is, that he

has not attained; under the Elector George Lewis, that imaginary power, for the sake of which he rendered so many services to the court of Hanover, but is now obliged to confess that he has got a master, whereas he himself was master before.

No. II.

THE BRUNSWICK-LUNEBURG FAMILY.

In the first chapter of this work, the author, when mentioning the father of the Princess Sophia Dorothea, as briefly as possible alluded to the House of Brunswick. This illustrious and ancient family, however, have not wanted more pains-taking chroniclers. The learned Leibnitz laboured long and earnestly upon their annals, and the equally patient Scheidius continued the investigation. The *Origines Guelficæ*, in five volumes, folio, is an enduring monument of their industry. Yet these bulky folios are at best but a fragment of what is evidently a most stupendous subject; for the labours of Scheidius end with Henry the Lion, Duke of Bavaria and Saxony, who married Matilda, eldest daughter of Henry II., King of England, having previously divorced his first wife, for not having brought him heirs male. As this hero flourished in the twelfth century, the reader may imagine the length to which this "Family Library" would have extended, had

it been completed on the plan adopted by the authors of the *Origines Guelficæ*. Two works were published in this country in the eighteenth century; one "The History of the Most Serene House of Brunswick-Lüneburg, in all the branches thereof, from its Origin to the Death of Queen Anne," which appeared soon after the accession of George I., and was followed in about thirty years, by "The Memoirs of the House of Brunswick, by Henry Rimius, Aulic Councillor to the King of Prussia." In the nineteenth century, Sir Andrew Halliday's quarto volume on the same subject, and his subsequent two octavo volumes of "Annals of the House of Hanover," carried out on a smaller scale the apparently Herculean task of the learned Leibnitz and the laborious Scheidius.

It is hoped that the readers of his Memoir will understand the dread felt by the author at the commencement of his work, of entering upon a subject, which required five volumes folio for an introduction, and be satisfied with the information respecting the Brunswick Lüneburg family, that he has thought proper to defer to this appendix. Even here he finds it necessary to be as concise as possible. Those who desire fuller particulars should refer to the pages of Dr. Halliday, or to the works of a similar nature that preceded his.

At the Treaty of Westphalia, which was rather disadvantageous to the Brunswick princes, who had taken an active part in the war, this illustrious family was divided

into two branches—Augustus Duke of Brunswick representing one, and Frederick Duke of Lüneburg the other.

At the decease of Augustus, his territories were divided amongst his three sons, Rudolph Augustus becoming Duke of Brunswick proper, Anthony Ulrick obtaining the principality of Wolfenbüttel, and the youngest son, Ferdinand Albert, the small territory of Bevern. Of these, the eldest left no male heirs; the second left sons, who made another division of the family, into the lines of Wolfenbüttel and Blankenburg: but by failure of issue male in both lines, the possessions were re-united in the family of the younger brother; whose son, Ferdinand Albert II. became Duke of Wolfenbüttel, and his son, Charles, succeeded to other honours of his house as Duke of Brunswick, Wolfenbüttel, and Blankenburg. He was succeeded by his eldest son, Charles William Ferdinand, who was killed at the battle of Jena, in 1806. The states of Brunswick and Hanover were then seized by Bonaparte. Frederick William, youngest son of Duke Charles, became sovereign of Brunswick, by his father's will. He died on the field of Waterloo. Charles William Ferdinand succeeded his father, not only as Duke of Brunswick and of the duchies we have just named, but as Duke of Bevern and Oels, titles which had belonged to other branches of the family, who had recently died without leaving male progeny. How this prince

came to lose his territories, in which he has been succeeded by his brother, must be in the recollection of our readers.

Frederick, Duke of Lüneburg, died in the year 1649, leaving the four sons of his brother, Duke George, his successors in the Lüneburg states, which, by the will of their father, confirmed by Duke Frederick, were divided into two sovereign principalities, Zelle and Hanover, or Lüneburg and Calemburg; of which the eldest son, Christian Lewis, was allowed to have Zelle, and the second son, George William, subsequently father of Sophia Dorothea, became possessed of Hanover. The younger brothers, John Frederick and Ernest Augustus, at this time did not enjoy any appanage, but the father shortly afterwards succeeded to the Bishoprick of Osnabrück, according to an article in the late treaty of peace. In the year 1665, Christian Lewis, the eldest of the brothers, died; George William succeeded to the Duchy of Zelle, and John Frederick became sovereign of Hanover: he died in 1679, and having left no issue by his wife, was succeeded in his sovereignty by his younger brother, the Bishop of Osnabrück. George William and Ernest Augustus took an active part in the warlike operations then proceeding with great vigour in Germany, particularly in supporting the States of Holland against France in 1674. In the spring of this year, the Bishop of Osnabrück [illegible] their [illegible] had

the command of the Imperial army, a reinforcement of five thousand men, and, in a battle which he fought near Treves, with the French army under Marshal Crequi, the Bishop's troops assisted materially in gaining the day, which had very nearly been lost, in consequence of the Zelle cavalry having given way on the first charge. The city of Treves soon afterwards capitulated. The Duke of Zelle, in the same year, led his victorious troops into the duchies of Bremen and Verden, which became completely at his disposal, on his making himself master of Stade. The peace of Nimeguen put an end to hostilities; its arrangements were advantageous to the Brunswick princes, or rather to the Duke of Zelle, for John Frederick, who died in the same year at Augsburg, had been a secret ally of the French king, as well as an apostate from the religion of his family, therefore he was not likely to profit by it.

The invasion of Austria by the Turks brought the sovereigns of Zelle and Hanover again into active military service. They sent a large body of troops, under the command of Prince George Lewis, the Bishop's eldest son, to the assistance of the Emperor Leopold, when the Infidels were besieging Vienna in 1684; they were followed, the year afterwards, by another reinforcement of ten thousand men, under the command of the prince's brothers, Frederick Augustus and Charles Philip, both of whom were killed in battle, the latter in 1690, the other in the

following year. Prince George Lewis had better fortune; he escaped all the dangers of that and many subsequent campaigns, to be the husband of his uncle's heiress, the unfortunate Sophia Dorothea. The Bishop had three other sons—Maximilian William, born in the year 1666, Christian, born 1671, and Ernest Augustus, born 1674.

The house of Saxe-Lauenburg having become extinct through failure of heirs made in 1689, the Duke of Zelle took possession of the states; and, notwithstanding the pretensions of several claimants, managed, by paying a sum of money in the way of compensation, to get nearly the whole of Lauenburg annexed to the Brunswick-Lüneburg territory. He was then taking a prominent part in the military operations going on in Germany in consequence of the war between the Emperor Leopold and the King of France, Louis XIV.; and the Bishop showed himself quite as active a partisan. The Lüneburg troops, besides displaying their valour at the sieges of Mentz and Bonn, were actively employed throughout the campaign, previously to the peace of Ryswick in 1697. Ernest Augustus seemed now inclined to push his own interests as forward as possible, quite independently of his elder brother. He increased his forces; he multiplied his negociations with neighbouring states, and he entered into an alliance with Louis XIV. In the year 1692 he had six thousand men in Hungary assisting the

Austrians, and nearly ten thousand in the Low Countries. His military reputation and his political intrigues were now to bring forth their proper fruit. The Emperor, principally on condition that he should withdraw from his alliance with the French king, invested him with the Electoral dignity, which, though opposed by the other princes of the empire, as against all precedent that a junior branch of the family should hold the highest rank, he was eventually allowed to retain. But there was still a higher object of his ambition. He had married Sophia, youngest daughter of the Elector Palatine, King of Bohemia, who married Elizabeth, daughter of James I., and the abdication of James II. opened to him a prospect of his wife succeeding to the throne of England as next in succession after the Princess Anne. This prospect continued to get brighter every year, but it was still distant when he died in 1698. The claim of his widow was acknowledged in the reign of King William: the bright promise appeared a certainty in the reign of Queen Anne. With these views the new Elector of Hanover, George Lewis, carried on his negociations with other powers with singular advantage to himself, and was apparently busily engaged during the war England waged against France at the commencement of the eighteenth century. The recently discovered despatches of the Duke of Marlborough contain numerous documents showing to what extent he was induced to assist

the country he considered so nearly his own. But his first military movement was against his cousin the Duke of Brunswick Wolfenbüttel, who had thought proper to enter into a coalition with the French King. To the Elector this was a very agreeable service, as he had long entertained a prejudice against his kinsman from certain pretensions the latter had put forth to a portion of the Brunswick-Lüneburg territory. The Duke of Wolfenbüttel, on leaving his cousin's troops had surprised one of his fortresses, wisely renounced his French alliance, and joined the allies. The consort of the Elector, his cousin Sophia Dorothea, was at this period enduring her unjustifiable imprisonment in the Castle of Ahlden. Her father, the Duke of Zelle, had become too old to take any active part in military or political affairs, and Hanover was the focus of all the intrigues in which the German princes were engaged during the war of the Spanish succession. The Elector contributed a large force made up of his own and his father-in-law's troops to reinforce Marlborough, and Prince Maximilian, the Elector's brother, was appointed to the command of the right wing of the allied army at the battle of Blenheim.

The Court of St. James's took umbrage at some of the proceedings of the Court of Hanover, and the consequence was, Marlborough received scarcely any assistance from the Hanoverian troops, and won the battle of

Malplaquet without them; but the Elector found it advisable to satisfy the English government, increased his reinforcements, and sent his son by the hapless Sophia Dorothea, to gain a knowledge of the profession of arms under the auspices of the great Duke. Prince George made several brilliant charges at the battle of Oudenarde, and distinguished himself as a dashing cavalry officer. His father was induced to take the command of the Imperial army on the 15th of September, 1707, and at first was so fortunate as to obtain some successes over the enemy. In the previous year his rank as Elector was acknowledged by the other princes of the empire, and he was permitted to take his seat in the Electoral College. In 1709 he resigned his command to Prince Eugene, Duke of Savoy, for it had been productive of very little advantage to the cause he had embraced. The allied princes were backward in rendering the assistance they were bound to furnish, and the army was in a very inefficient condition; but it was always apparent that though not deficient in bravery the husband of Sophia Dorothea wanted many qualifications to make him a great general.

On returning to Hanover he found employment enough for himself and his ministers in carrying on those political intrigues for which his court had so long been famous. It has been said by Archdeacon Coxe that the Elector was quite indifferent to his fair prospects in

England, but if he appeared so, there is little doubt he was at heart deeply interested in the schemes of his mother's friends to secure her succession to the crown at the demise of Queen Anne. The property and influence of the Brunswick-Lüneburg family were gliding into his hands. In 1705 his uncle, George William, died, and the dukedom of Zelle became included in the Hanoverian dominions;—in June 1714 his mother died, and he succeeded to her claims as acknowledged by the English parliament;—on the first day of the month of August following Queen Anne died, and on the same day the Elector of Hanover was proclaimed George I. King of England.

THE END.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY A. J. VALPY, RED LION COURT, FLEET STREET.

00032552

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 10 February, 2016